Pathway to God

(A Journal of Spiritual Life)

आत्मा वा अरे द्रष्टव्य :।

SRI GURUDEVA MANDIR

Academy of Comparative Philosophy & Religion

BELGAUM.

VOL. XI No. 2)　　(January 1977

गुरुदेव रानडे व त्यांची पारमार्थिक शिकवण

(ले.– **ग. वि. तथा काकासाहेब तुळपुळे** एम्. ए.)

हा ग्रंथ अॅकॅडेमीतर्फे फेब्रुवारी १९७७ मध्यें प्रसिद्ध होईल.

गुरुदेव रानडे यांच्या तत्त्वज्ञानाचा अभ्यास करून, श्री तुळपुळे यांनीं त्या तत्त्वज्ञानाच्या पार्श्वभूमीवर वीस ग्रंथ लिहिले आहेत. त्यापैकी “गुरुदेव रानडे: साक्षात्काराचें तत्त्वज्ञान व सोपान” या ग्रंथाला १९६२ सालच्या महाराष्ट्र राज्य ग्रंथ स्पर्धेतील तत्त्वज्ञान विषयक दुसरे बक्षीस मिळाले आणि “ज्ञानेश्वरी : आत्मानंदाचें तत्त्वज्ञान” याला त्या वर्षाचा उत्कृष्ट मराठी ग्रंथ म्हणून, १९६७ चें केळकर पारितोषिक देण्यांत आले.

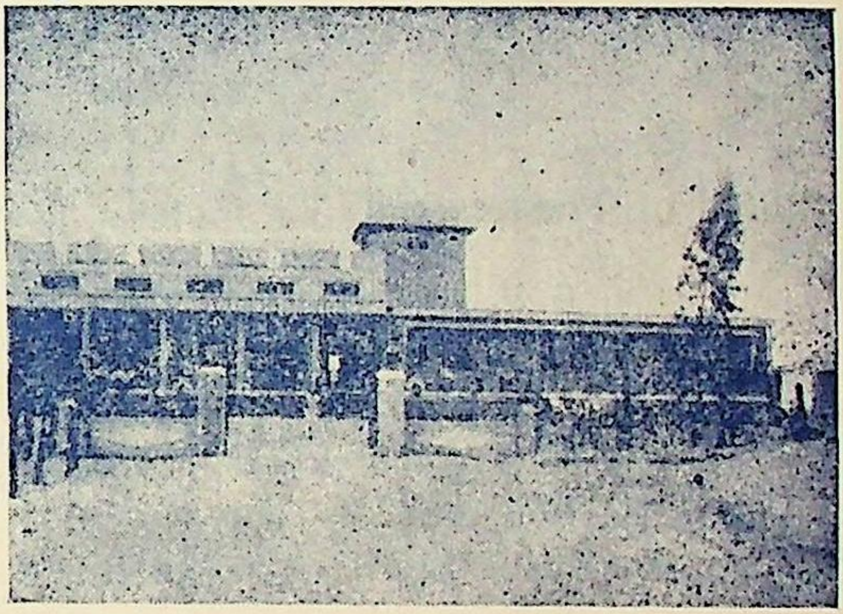
प्रसिद्धीनंतर या ग्रंथाची किमत १५ रु. राहील. प्रसिद्धीपूर्वी पैसे पाठवून नांवे नोंदविल्यास सवलतीची किमत रू. १०/. दहा घेण्यात येईल.

पत्रव्यवहार करण्याचा पत्ता–

अॅकॅडेमी ऑफ कंपेरेटिव्ह फिलॉसॉफी
अँड रिलिजन : बेळगांव.
टिळकवाडी पूर्व : बेळगांव ५९००११

PATHWAY TO GOD

(A Journal of Spiritual life)



SHRI GURUDEV MANDIR

Academy of Comparative Philosophy & Religion

BELGAUM.

Vol XI No. 2 January 1977 Rs. 1-75

Editorial Commitee

1. Shri. R. S. BHIDE, B.A.,LL.B. *Chairman*
2. Shri. N. R. DESHPANDE, B.Sc. (Min Engg), LL.B. *Editor*
3. Shri. M. S. DESHPANDE, M.A.
4. Prof. S. G. DESHPANDE, M.A.
5. Prof. K. D. TANGOD, M.A.

⁂

Board of Trustees

1. Shri. G. V. TULPULE M.A. *Chairman*
2. Shri J. V. PARULEKAR, B.A *Secretary*
3. Shri. K. D. SANGORAM, B.A.,LL.B.
4. Shri. R. S. BHIDE, B.A.,LL.B.
5. Shri. N. S. METRANI, B.A.,LL.B.
6. Shri. D. B. Parulekar

⁂

Printed by
Vikrant Printers
Hindwadi-BELGAUM.

Published by
Shri J. V. Parulekar B.A.
Trustee & Secretary,
A. C. P. R. BELGAUM.

Vol. XI, No. 2
January, 1977
Rs. 1-75

Pathway to God

CONTENTS

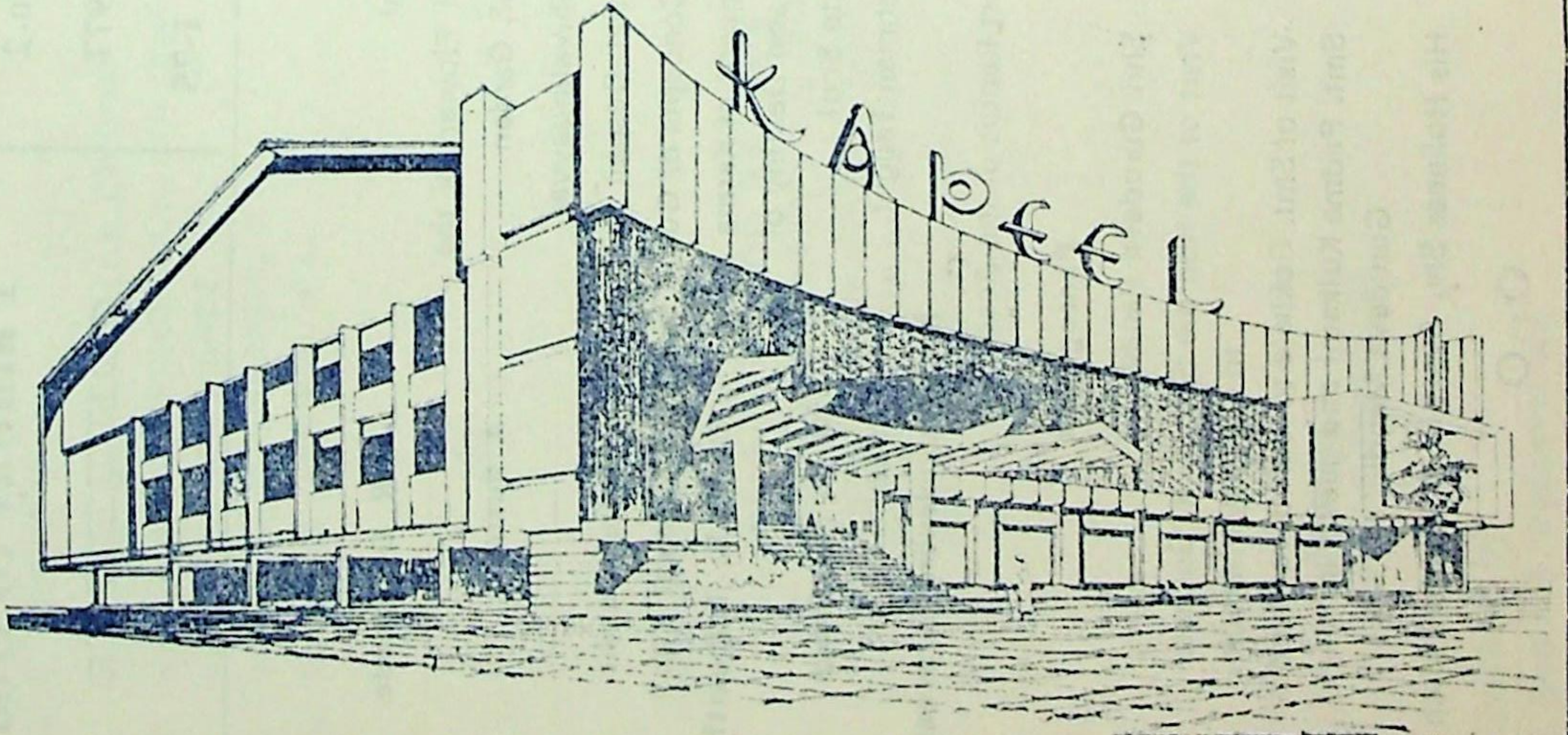
1)	Prayer	—	(i)
2)	Editorial	N. R. Deshpande	(ii)
3)	Fragrant Flowers of the Spiritual Garden	A florist	1
4)	Saint Shivalingavva	— —	3
5)	Existential Despair	Motilal Pandit	7
6)	Many Concepts of God	J. Clement Vaz	25
7)	The Concept of Karma	Dr. S. R. Talghatti	45
8)	[illegible] and Destiny of the Fiinte Soul	M. N. Narsimhan	57
9)	The Brahman Taught ……	Swami Brahmanandendra Saraswati	73
10)	A short Report of the Academy		89

Photographs

1) Shri Gurudeva Ranade
2) Visit of the Hon'ble Shri H. R. Gokhale to Gurudeva Mandir
3) Visit of Smt. Gokhale to Gurudeva Mandir
4) Smt. Padma Kulkarni and guests in Gurudeva Mandir.
5) His Holiness Shri Swamiji of Dabholi Math

O–O

With Best Compliments from :-



Prop :- **Nerlekar Brothers**

Pathway to God

(*A Journal of Spiritual Life*)

" One God, One World, One Humanity "

Vol XI | **January 1977** | **No 2**

Prayer

पूषन्नेकर्षे यम सूर्यं
प्राजापत्य व्यूह रश्मीन्समूह ।
तेजो यत्ते रूपं कल्याणतमं तत्ते
पश्यामि योऽसावसौ पुरुषः सोऽहमस्मि ॥

Oh Sun, who art our Nourisher,
Giver of Knowledge, Dispenser of
Justice, Giver of Light, Son of
Creator, disperse thy rays, draw
in thy light, so that I may be enabled
to behold thy most beautiful form.
I am that same Person as makes
thee who thou art.

Īśāvāsyopaniṣad.

Editorial

Through the incessant throbs of 'time', the living structure of humanity is getting cotinuosly erected. To a speck in the cross section of this structure -in-continuum, a question gets revealed, viz., 'What exactly is the blue-print of the Great Architect?' Search for the answer to this question has engaged the intuitive struggle of generations. To the few intellectual minds, doubting the very basal reality, the struggle of generations in the name of God is simply a chronic inebriety.

To many of us in the present generation the inestimable Reality is only a matter of intellectual manipulations. But, for the authentic few the Reality is the boundless spectrum of eternity.

If saints and god-realised persons have come and stayed here, why are we left back and why is the show of existence still continuing? – such are the questions with annoying frankness.

These questions and substratum realities do, at times, disturb the equilibrium of philosophic thinkings and theosophic conceptualizations. May be that the humanity is really in the grip of Hegelian cyclic doctrine of " Thesis, Antethesis and Synthesis ". What, then, may be the "Synthesis" of our present generation? At times, through such thinking, we have the pefect explanation for the continued 'imperfection' of humanity. But, then, it is like a big lecture on Force and momentum, which lecture can not be a substitute for a single litre petrol. Realistic figuration of humanity collected through the trickling drops of past generations reveals the depths yet to be fathomed. If the 'synthesis' of realisation by our generation is going to emerge as the 'thesis' of tomorrow's getting subjected to the crushing jaws, of the 'antethesis' of the later tomorrows, then, the Hegelian observation may settle as the epitaph of Humanity.

It is said that human beings, in their barest reality, are thinking animals. Have we exercised this 'thinking' too liberally, too abunduntly so as to deform and degenerte ? Has our boundless thinking and writing generated a creation of our own, encircling us now into worst confusions of worded fictions ? Struggle to search answers for these questions inevitably leads us into the introspection.

All this tidal upsurgence of thoughts may be occurring due to the frustrated expectations of 'instant' divinisation of the entire creation.

May be, that this world is just like a railway platform where we all are waiting for the great departure. May be that saintly 'drivers' and 'guards' are ready with the train in full readiness. And! may be, that we are lingering on the platform only, without caring to enterain the green signalled ready train to divinity.

Should, then, we not stop thinking and writing for a while, and close our eyes into deep introspection, If we desire our thoughts to mature into actions, then, we should.

– **N. R. Deshpande**

○ ○

Shri Gurudev Dr. R. D. Ranade

Born
JAMKHANDI
3-7-1886

Samadhi
NIMBAL
6 6-1957

Om

Fragrant Flowers of the Spiritual Garden
of
Sri Gurudev

Garnered by
A florist

Hindi Saints

1. Kabir is a saint for all Humanity. People suppose that he merely spiritualised the Hindus and Muslims. This is far less than the truth. He was one of those who have aimed at spiritualising the whole of Humanity.

2. Kabir is a saint to whom all the world must listen. His message will bring together all humanity.

3. Kabir is an evangel of universal peae and good--will.

4. Kabir is the greatest of Hindi mystics. He combines in himself deep philosophical insight with heights of mystical experience.

5. Tulasidas would take the first place among those who have enriched Hindi spiritual literature by their poetical imagination, moral and devotional fervour, and philosophical insight.

6. Tulasidas might well be regarded as a literary Avatar of Vālmīkī as he clothes in Hindi garb most of ideas of Vālmīkī.

7. Surdas is the greatest Hindi lyrical poet. He is most remarkable for his lyrical and devotional poetry.

8. Mirabai's description of he Dark Night of the Soul, as well as her vivid account, after the Spiritual Dawn, of her having come in possession of the Jewel of God, have left a deep impression on Hindi spiritual literature.

9. Raidas is held in very great esteem for the brilliance of his intellect, his high poetic capacity, as well as his devotion to God.

10. Nanak is at his best in earnest appeal for turning every moment of our life to spiritual use ···· By his philosophico-mystical insight, he sees the unity of the internal and external God, as well as he perceives God in all things, and all things in God.

● ● ●

He who chooses the Good attains happiness. He who prefers the Pleasant ever loses his object. The wise are not deceived by the attractions of the Pleasant. They choose the Good. Fools are snared into the mere pleasant and perish.

– **Kathopanishad**

Saint Shivalingavva

(After the birth of a Spiritual Son, it was but natural for the Saint to compose and sing a Cradle Song. In this song she describes some salient spiritual experiences conferred on her by her Master - especially the experience of a Spiritual Son. She tells us how he was born and how he grew up day by day – month by month. She puts him in a Spiritual Cradle and invites realised Spiritual Sisters to join her in swinging the Cradle singing the Lullaby glorifying her Son as well as her Master. We have given below a versified English rendering of the same for the benefit of our readers. M. S. D.)

3. Spiritual Cradle - Song

(1)

Remember your Master, the moment you arise,
And fill your mind with Nama likewise.
Impart Self-knowledge to your ignorant frame,
And live in the Light of the Self Supreme.

(2)

Free your mind from the Guna's grip,
Entrust your emotions to the care of Self.
Then will you know the Yogi's Bliss,
For which soon seek a Sadguru's grace.

(3)

He cleansed my mind of the filth of sin
And made me realise my meritorious form.
Well did he feed me with nectar of Nama
And revealed the Reality in my daily Nema

(4)

He annulled my great attraction
for base material pleasure.
And granted me a feeling
that all was a dreamy treasure.
From him I got a Son Spiritual
who grew up month by month
And became my sole Ideal
of highest spiritual worth.

(5)

He turned Himself into Vastu
in my top-most brain - centre
And I had the Lord's Vision
with the power of perfect Mantra.
And soon my mind, enraptured
merged in His superb Lustre.

(6)

A Spiritual Son is born to me
To him let's sing a Lullaby !
All the objects of pleasure now,
have been flung far away.
Swing the Spirtual Cradle soon
and attain the Lord's benign boon.

(7)

Gather ye ! my sisters dear
ye good realised souls !
Wear ye the nose-rings fair,
of brilliant spiritual pearls
Come ye to swing the Cradle fine
And sing the blissful song divine.

(8)

My Master has graciously granted
a supremely beautiful baby
Never shall I fail now
to sing him a sweet Lullaby.
You have broken my vicious cycle
of recurring birth and death,
Ever, hence, shall I worship Thee
constantly day and night.

(9)

Of the ambrosial juice of Nama Divine
is born this paragon of Beauty fine
Unsoiled by the filth of flesh
Suddenly did he alight afresh.
Thus have we seen the Vastu,
in the fine form of this son
Let's sing a sweet Lullaby
in the Light of his lustrous vision.

(10)

This song is the gift
of my Master's grace
A blessing to those aspirants
who realise its deep significance.
But to those who don't care to know

It's a mere mire of illusion
Realise, hence, this Indweller
and cross this ocean of delusion.

(II)

Hush! Let's sing the glory of our Master
the glory of genuine saints.
Let's have the vision of Siva
and sing His blessing great.
Let's remember and sing the glory
of our revered Umadi Saint.

* — *

Give gifts with faith, not neglectfully but with joy; with humility, with fear and with kindness.

- Taittiriyopanishad.

Truth wins ever, and not untruth. With Truth is paved the road to the Divine. On that road walk the *Risis*, with desires all quenched, to reach the Supreme Abode of Truth.

– Mundakopanishad

EXISTENTIAL DESPAIR

Moti Lal Pandit

> Acid the knowledge travellers draw. The world
> Little and dull, today, tomorrow and
> Tomorrow makes you see yourself - an appalled
> Oasis in a tedium of sand.
> Should we then go or stay ? If you can : stay :
> Go, if you must.
>
> (Baudeliare, *Le Voyage*)

From the dawn of human history – that is, when man began to think about the meaning of his existence in this impersonal world - there has been a deep urge in man for *that meaning* which may authenticate human life as a lived reality. This inner urge for meaning can easily be discerned in the Shamanistic dance and tribal ritual. This search received a positive justification till the 19th century from philosophers in terms of progress. But with Kierkegaard human thinking took a new direction. Now leap, without rational justification, was demanded, and the nature of this leap was mainly " religious ".

This existential leap, and the opposition to reason, can be found in literature as early as 1864 in one of Dostoevsky's hero. The hero of the *Notes from the Underground* says :

> " You see, gentlemen, reason is an excellent thing, there is no disputing that, but reason is nothing but reason and satisfies only the rational side of man's nature, while will is a manifestation of the whole life ...... and although our life, in this manifestation of it, is often worthless, yet it is life and not simply extracting square roots. "

(*Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre*, P. 73)

It was Dostoevsky who for the first time used the term " absurd " as an expression for the irrational in man and the world. However, it was Kierkegaard who developed the idea that, in accepting the "absurd" as the basis of existence, man is then in a position to see life as it is.

The search of all existential thinkers is centered on the search of the "self". It is not a search for its own sake; rather a search for the sake of the self. The involvement in the truth of Being is the main feature of Being.

All existential thinkers agree to the fact that man's knowledge of the self is basically irrational. This knowledge is costly precisely because the price to be paid is in terms of *anguish*. Kierkegaard, by using the biblical story of Abraham, shows the impossiblity of obtaining the knowledge of truth through reason alone.

> " By faith Abraham went out form the land of his fathers and became a so-

> -journer in the land of promise. He left one thing behind, took one thing with him: he left earthly understanding behind and took faith with him-otherwise he would not have wandered forth but would have thought this unreasonable.
> (*Fear and Trembling*, P. 31).

Man, through the absurd, transcends his fleshly existence and gains the knowledge of Reality, which is the Word. The leap of faith consists in surrendering to the command of the Word, for the calling of God is higher than the ethical duty precisely because it is " the great leap whereby I pass into infinity". One who desires to live in " infinity " must be ready to pay the price in terms of " despair ".

All existential thinkers are in agreement as far as human freedom is concerned; but as to its meaning and purpose, there is a sharp disagreement between those who believe in God and those who deny his existence.

The earliest existential hero, even before Kierkegaard wrote of his " leap " and Sartre of his " freedom, " is Hamlet. Hamlet, while making an inward journey, finds, to his great dismay, that he had " more offences at my back than I have thought to put them on, imaginaton to give them shape, or time to act them in ". The opening of the play itself starts with a question of self-identity : Who is there ? The answer is given by Hamlet himself : " What a piece of work is man?"-" a handful of dust". He tells Ophelia never to believe in a complacent answer: " We are arrant-knaves, all; believe none of us". Hamlet was horrorstricken at the physical basis of his own identity and, while picturing the body of Polonius, he tells Rosencrantz and Guildenstern that he had "compounded it dust whereto it is kin" (iv. 2). Hamlet discovers the self which is not merely dust, but:

What is man
If the chief good and market of his time
Is but to sleep and feed? A beast, no more.
(iv. 4).

Finally Hamlet discovers his self- identity and function:

it is I
Hamlet, the Dane. (v.i).

Hamlet, when meeting Laertes, makes an attempt at separating the grain from the chaff in the discovery of his new self:

Wasn'nt Hamlet wronged Laertes? Never Hamlet:
If Hamlet from himself be taken away
And when he's not himself both wrong Laertes,
Then Hamlet does
not..... (v. 2).

Hamlet will not find his redemption in the power to act, judge or forgive, but, like Lear, in the discovery of the truth of love. Hamlet, when makes his "leap", accepts his love for the previously despised woman :

I loved Ophelia; forty thousand brothers
Could not with all their quantity of love
Make up my sum.

The loss cannot be now repaired precisely because Ophelia has been dragged to muddy death, and her death has sealed the fate of Hamlet. It is "other love" which will prove to Hamlet as "comfort, not despair". His love for Horatio had already "fixed the mark" in the Valley of Evil.

> Give me that man,
> That is not passion's slave and I will
> wear him
> In my heart's core, in my heart of heart,
> As I do thee. (iii. 2)

Horatio has no courage to express his heart. His reply comes at a time when his friend is dying in his arms. In the beginning it is the offer of death :

> I am more an antique Roman than a Dane:
> Here's yet some liquor left. (v. 2)

But Hamlet's plea echoes the earlier commitment :

> If thou didst ever hold me *in thine heart*
> Absent thee from felicity awhile,

his consent will be only to live so that he may

> speak to the yet unknowing world,
> How these things came about.

We not only find here an irrational decision, but a pair of friends who would later assume a great importance in Sartre and Beckett.

> The lunatic, the lover and the poet
> Are of imagination all compact,

and the 'shapes' they assume or represent are not, even after centuries have passed, changeable.

In Sartre's novels each character seeks to create his own "essence"; each character discovers himself when he encounters an unexpected situation, and each one, having discovered himself, meets his own destruction. Sartre develops his philosophic theme round three characters, namely, Mathieu, the teacher of philosophy, Burnet, the communist, and Daniel, the homosexual. Each character is concerned with himself in the sense that each one desires to know himself and be himself.

Mathieu de la Rue wants to remain uncommitted so that he may be free in espousing any cause which demands his attention. Burnet is torn between the two passions : the allegiance to the communist party and the personal responsibility. Daniel is a black shadow. Mathieu, in *The Age of Reason*, is an intellectual who is devoted only to his mistress, Marcelle, and to two pupils, Boris and Ivich. Although he looks after Marcelle, he is, in fact, concerned about himself, and in one place Mercelle says to him:

> 'You' ve acquired the taste for self-analysis .... It helps you to get rid of yoursel ...... you want to be nothing.'
>
> 'To be. nothing ? ' repeated Mathieu slowly. 'No, ... Listen. I – I recognize no allegiance except to myself.'
>
> (*The Age of Reason* P. 13).

Mathieu is incapable to act precisely because he has refused to commit himself to the Other, and action is possible only in cooperation with the Other. Mathieu does not commit himself to any cause, for he is afraid of losing his freedom. He is concerned only about himself. Yet his very self, to which he feels allegiance, evades him. He should at least commi himselfs to Marcelle, for , by committing a deed, the has made her pregnant. Although he recognizes this duty, yet he tries to side-step it.

Mathieu feels that Burnet has *that* of which he has no knowledge. 'He is freer than I, he is in harmony with himself and the party'.

> 'Well,' said Mathieu, ' you' re lucky'.
> 'Lucky to be a Communist' ?
> 'Yes'.
> 'What a thing to say. It's a matter of choice, old boy.'
> 'I know. You're lucky to have been able to choose.'
> (P. 121).

Mathieu recognizes the fact that, since he has nothing to defend, his freedom is a burden to him He cannot make use of his freedom. He, when Burnet leaves him, expresses his position : ' I am utter wash-out' (P. 125).

Mathieu is caught up in a tragical situation, a situation which revolves between the knowledge of self and the fear of losing the self by committing himself to something. Danniel, on the other hand, is bent not only on the destrucrion of others, but also of his own.

Sartre here introduces the Oedipus myth. The guilty desire for self-destruction is present both in Mathieu and Daniel. Daniel is handsome courteous and has the power to win friends, but nobody seems to be able to see him as he is. Daniel is always full of disgust when someone approaches him. He kicks the flowers which the caretaker's daughter leaves at his door. He projects this hatred into those who admire him.

Daniel meticulously dresses when he decides to sacrifice his cats. He finds a pimple on his chin; he shaves round it. It is at this moment that the obsession for self-mutilation seizes him. Finally, Daniel carries his cats in a basket to the river:

> 'Suddenly, he saw his shadow, a grotesque and stocky figure with the shadow of the wicker basket dangling from the end of his arm. Daniel smiled: he was very tall. He drew himself up to his full height, but the shadow remained squat and misshapen, like that of a chimpanzee' (P. 85)

The cats, in their frighto, wound each other and the blood begins to drip from the basket. Daniel does not take any notice of it, although the sacrifice is a part of himself. As he sits on the river to gain the strength for his deed :

> 'Daniel heard himself say in mournful tones: 'When man hasn't the courage to kill himself wholesale, he must do so retail'. 'He would walk down to the water and say ; 'Farewell to what I love most in the world.' (P. 90)

Daniel is not yet in a position to mutilate himself completely; he does not kill his cats, but carries them home.

When Daniel is back home, he encounters Mathieu. Daniel, on seeing him, is horrified at his normality. Daniel increases his hatred, and when Mathieu asks for a loan of 4,000 francs for Marcelle's abortion, Daniel pretends that he has got no money with him. Daniel wants to be punished, but Mathieu is not able to notice the predicament of Daniel.

Daniel, however, before taking his revenge on ' normality ', makes another attempt at self-destruction. Now he tries to punish himself through castration :

> ' Nothing impels him to decide, nothing stops him from doing so : I shall be lying on the *inert, my clothes torn and sticky : the razor will be on the floor, red, jagged, inert.* (p. 267)

Again Daniel fails. But the final deed which Daniel commits is more horrible than self-castration; he combines hatred and self-punishment by marrying Marcelle. In this manner he tries to destroy the image of Mathieu as a man and as a lover. But, at the same time, he becomes victim of his own victory.

Daniel's honeymoon, described in *The Reprieve*, is as can be expected. He proves to be a good actor in the sense that he shows a deep concern for Marcelle, and she feels as if she is missing nothing. Meanwhile, Mathieu receives a letter from Daniel.

> 'I was my own burden: but never burdensome enough, Mathieu. For one instance, on that June evening when I thought I had encountered myself in your bewildered eyes. You *saw* me ... You knew that entity .... and yet you saw it. I merely saw you seeing it.' (p.343).

The knowledge, according to Sartre, which is achieved through the self for the self, is not adequate;

the self has to be seen by others before it is known. It is this urge which leads Daniel to lose himself by allowing himself to find his full indentity in the mind of the Other. Daniel, as he is, enters the Catholic Church, and he writes to Mathieu:

> 'I adapt for my own use, your prophet's foolish words .... I am seen therefore I am' (P. 345)

Yet the story of Daniel does not come to an end. In *Iron in the Soul* Daniel returns alone to Paris and waits there for the occupation by German forces. He rejoices at the downfall of the society by whose values he had been condemned. He welcomes the Germans for the simple reason that they will carry out the nihilistic will.

Daniel is like a dark god who desires to live in the realm of the evil angels. His fate is that of a damned in the *Inferno* of Dante. Since Sartre did not write the concluding part of *Roads to Freedom*, Daniel is left as he is.

Mathieu ultimately finds the self which had eluded him. Mathieu, in *The Reprieve*, while on a holiday, reads in a poster: 'A white mobilizaion order or form numbered '2'. 'Mathieu is not yet able to act. Two days later, while on the edge of a bridge, he contemplates suicide. He joins army. This is his first step towards the upward journey. Mathieu's life takes a new turn when he, along with his companions, enters the village. He feels his friend has discovered himself. When the group reaches the first house of the village,

> Suddenly Mathieu began to shout ......
> ' I'm fed up ! ' he cried; ' fed up ! fed up ! '

> Pinette stopped and stared at him.
> ' What's biting you ? '
> 'Nothing', said Mathieu, dumfounded at his own behaviour.
> ' I think I must be going mad. '
>
> (*Iron in the Soul*, p. 179)

He, while in this state, takes a decision which will be his salvation. Mathieu ultimately imposes his freedom because it is a genuine freedom in the sense that a deed issues from it :

> '.... the world can think what it likes, I'm through with remorse, with hesitations, with mental reservations. No one has a right to judge me; no one is thinking about me; no one will remember me; no one can make up my mind for me ...... Here and now I have decided that death has all along been the secret of my life, that I have lived for the sole purpose of dying. I die in order to demonstrate the impossibility of living. My eyes will put an extinguisher upon the earth and shut it down for ever. The earth raised its topsy - turvy face to the dying man : the foundering skys swept across him with all its stars. But Mathieu kept watch without so much as deigning to pick up these useless gifts. ' (p. 203)

Mathieu has won his freedom at the cost of loneliness. the meaning he has chosen for his life is – death. Through this choice Mathieu creates his own essence of life.

Burnet, though a communist, is still filled with bourgeois and Christian values. Sartre has not given an intergrated picture of Burnet, as he has done with Mathieu and Daniel. He, however, gives a solid narrative about Burnet at the end of *Iron in the Soul.*

Burnet thinks that it is his duty to preserve his life, so that he may serve his fellowmen through the party to which he has committed himself. Burnet is taken as a prisoner-of-war by the Germans. The only aim he finds in life is to work for the party. While in the camp, he is able in contacting the Party members. He sets on work and he is helped by Schneider.

In *Drole d' Amitie* a new character, Chalais, is introduced. He is an active member of the Party and works at the Headquarters. He tells Burnet that Party's policies have changed and, therefore, whatever work he has done has to be undone again. Burnet introduces Chalais to the Group and hands his leadership over to him. Chalais recognizes Schneider. Schneider, after writing a critical article about the Soviet - German treaty, had been kicked out of the Party. Burnet, while facing Schneider, tells him about his decision.

Since Germany and Soviet Union are allies, every attempt is to be made in sabotaging the imperialist war. This is the new directive of the Party. Burnet accepts this policy, but resigns from leadership. The Group, unable to understand the change of policy, lose their heart.

Chalais is unable to hold men together. He works against Burnet. Burnet has now to make a personal choice. He has, in fact, already made a choice in refusing to accept the verdict of others both on the political condition and on the character of his friend. Though Burnet's rebellion becomes public, yet he has not made a deliberate choice. Both Burnet and Schneider escape from the camp. But while they struggle through the barbed wire, machinegun fire breaks out. Schneider is hit, and Burnet drags him through the snow towards a shelter. Schneider is in deep death agony, and there is an upsurge of despair in him. Choice came, but it came too late, for Schneider, for whom the escape was made, is already dying :

> " Burnet bent down and thrusting his hand into Vicarios' matted hair, he called out, as though still able to save him from the horror, as if two doomed men, at the final moment, could triumph over solitude:
> 'The Party! To hell with the party; you are my only friend ... '
> The Germans rushed down slope, holding on to the trees he got up and walked to meet them.
> His death was only just the beginning."

Burnet could not choose death precisely because he was a constructor. But death chose him precisely because he had earlier made a false choice, and he discovers this in the agony of death.

iii

Although Albert Camus has denied his affinities with existentialism, yet it cannot be denied that he is, in his philosophic outlook, very close to Sartre. His novels and plays are filled with such characters who, on discovering themselves, deny their discovery.

Camus in his play, *Caligula and Cross Purpose* tries to throw the mantle of existential anguish on his hero, Caligula, who is an emperor. Caligula, although knowing the limitations of his freedom which the external forces impose, is not ready to accept the social restraint on his actions. Man, although living in an absurd world, must go on living, for suicide is no answer. He denies the experience of beauty and the duty of *engagement*. He lives in a world of total freedom, because he leads an isolated existence. He chooses, no doubt, this mode of life deliberately, but he knows its consequences too. Caligula, while beating the gong, calls the world to judgement and, while the soldiers and patricians enter the hall, he takes his mistress near the mirror and smashes the reflection in the mirror. Caesonia, his mistress, murmurs his name and the reflection in the mirror answers:

Yes ...... Caligula.

Caligula's journey of self-discovery begins and which finally culminates in self-destruction. He knows no loyalty. He loses all social responsibility to the extent that there is no possibility of recovering it. His violence finds its consummation in the strangling of Caesonia, who alone still loved him:

> Caesonia: Tell me you mean to keep me with you.
>
> Caligula: I don't know. All I know—and it's the most horrible thing of all—is that this shameful tenderness is the one sincere emotion that my life has given up to now. (P. 91)

After breaking this last link, Caligula again faces the mirror. He, while kneeling in front of his image in the mirror, gives vent to the despair of mankind:

> I've stretched out my hands; see, I stretch out my hands, but it's always you I find, you only, confronting me, and I have come to hate you .... we shall forever be guilty. The night tonight is heavy as the sum of human sorrows.

These words express the deep interior agony. Caligula, recognizing the fact of absurdity, did not make a positive leap. This freedom won by solitude and isolation ultimately leads him to nothingness.

In *Cross Purpose* Jan as a young boy leaves his home for some sunnier place. He returns after his marriage,and he visits the inn, without revealing his identity, to his mother and sister. He is incapable of making any contact with his mother and sister, and he is murdered by his mother and sister for his money. They throw the body into a river. This journey of Jan to his home destorys him. When the mother opens the passport, she finds it to be her son's. This very failure of not recognizing her son destroys her:

> My heart has learnt again today what grief means, and I am not young enough to come to terms with it. In any case when a mother is no longer capable of recognizing her own son, it's clear her role on earth is ended. (P. 153)
>
> The absurd does not lessen the significance of the event;
>
> It only proves that in the world where everything can be denied, there are forces undeniable; and on this earth where nothing's sure we have our certainties. And mother's love for her son is now my certainty. (p. 153)

This sort of love for an irrational certainty of love is equally paid by an irrational certainty of guilt. Although the wrong was done in ignorance, the ignorance is no remedy. Man, whether for good or worse, makes his own destiny with his own actions.

Bernard Rieux, the doctor, in *The Plague*, does not believe death to be a viable goal of human life. In all Camus' works the tension is created by a deep ambivalence of delight, on the one hand, in the irrational and, on the other hand, by the duty of social commitment. This ambiguity is clear in *The Plague*, and we see it when Bernard does not raise any objection for Rambert's, who wants to meet his mistress, escape from the plague-stricken city, whereas he himself remains within its walls. His choice of commitment is impregnable. The battle must be waged till prevented by death.

The narrator, Clamence, of *The Fall* had abused his position in the society by exploiting others for his own self-gratification. Finally, he reaches a stage whereby he is unable to commit himself to anything. He has become an ' ancient mariner ', and he discloses his baseness to a silent listener. Although he has the knowledge of good and evil, he makes no use of it :

> It's too late now. It'll always be too late. Fortunately.

In the beginning this judge-penitent is not ready to see the truth about himself; but, when he sees it, he is not ready to accept it; finally, he btho sees it and accepts it, but he will not make use of it.

Clamence is an exact opposite to Rieux. Rieux, as he discovers himself, commits himself more and more to the service of humanity. Camus ' life and work leave no doubt as to which side he committed himself.

iv

Previously, that is, before the secularisation of human outlook, the journey of man for self-discovery was thought of in terms of divine purpose. We find Oedipus leaving Corinth for the simple reason that he is in search of a divine guidance, and oracle sets his stepson onto the roads of Thebes. The second oracle, dramatized by Sophocles, leads him onto a journey which enables him to find out who he was. Dante's search, through Beatrice, for meaning was divinely prompted. T.S. Eliot, within our own time, wrote within this tradition.

But since the Middle Ages, for most of the writers, writing within a secular perspective, human destiny is no more to be traced in the divine purpose; rather man is his own destiny maker. Even in this materialistic age most of the writers still think that death gives the primitive *frisson.* Man's search for meaning may not begin with a mantic event, but it is death which is still thought to give an important message; and Shakespeare thinks death to be a 'mighty messenger' for *every man*.

Sartre, although denying all supernatural reality, bestows an *ambiance* of mystery to those who discover themselves in death. This mystery we find in Sartre when Mathieu, in a moonlit night, takes a rifle to die with his friend; he calls up the funeral lilies which, in religious terms, syombolise the beauty of death. Burnet discovers it in the music of machine-gun fire, whereas Daniel is not given this release.

Camus has, in *The Fall*, an image which symbolises the interior voice. The hero, while hearing a cry: 'Help Me' !, ignores it. After several months he hears an interior voice to self-judgement :

"Taken by surprise, I suddenly wheeled round; there was no one there; no barge or boat. I turned back towards the island and heard the laughter behind me, a little farther off as if it were going down stream...... At the same time I was aware of the rapid beating of my heart."

Death calls everyman. A man without hope lives a desolate life, and finds no reason or justification for his life. So, we may, with St. Augustine, say:

" Send Your Word upon the earth by your Messengers. We recount their works, but it is You who work in them that they may bring forth a living soul."

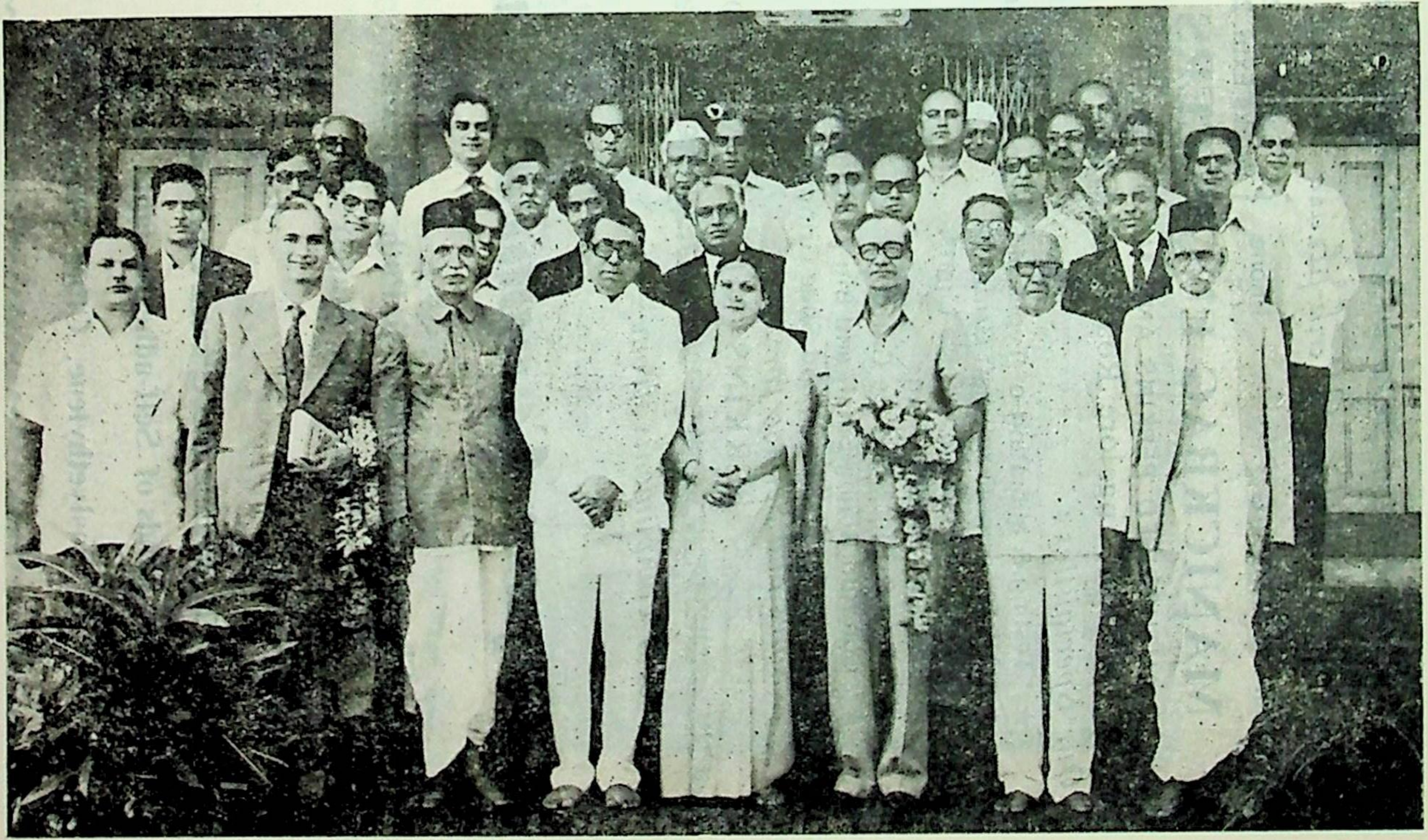
•—•

The Philosopher's work is not done when he has realised within himself the peace of mind. His supreme business is to bring about peace and harmony in the society, the state and the world at large ... ... it may be said that the future of the world rests with the philosophers.

— **Gurudev Ranade**

The Hon'ble Shri H. R. Gokhale – Minister of Law and Company Affairs

in Gurudev Mandir : Belgaum. 10-11-1976



Smt. Gokhale in Gurudev Mandir : Belgaum. 10-11-1976

1) Shri J. V. Parulekar 2) Miss Nanda Parulekar 3) Smt. Gokhale
4) Smt. Gogate 5) Miss Anjali Ambardekar 6) Shri K. D. Sangoram

MANY CONCEPTS OF GOD

J. Clement Vaz

Whatever be the concept of God being considered, it is necessarily linked with Religion, for while there can be a religion without the God-idea, for example, Buddhism and Jainism, one cannot conceive of God without a religion. It is of course very difficult to attempt a comprehensive definition of God just as much as it is very difficult to precisely define Religion, but to one who believes in the existence of a Transcendent Power, the Creator, the First Cause, the " Unmoved Mover " of all things seen and unseen, no definition of God is really necessary. He has the inner conviction and certitude which are the fruit of his feelings, acts and experiences in life. Fundamentally, therefore, belief in and worship of God is natural to man and is as old as man himself.

In the same way, one can hardly trace in history a people that never had some form of religion or other. " No matter how simple its way of life and thought, every primitive group holds that there are forces outside of man and the immediate physical world which affect man's fate and with which he must maintain relations in order that he prosper."[1] Thus religion has been stated to consist of three elements, namely, the natural recognition of a Power or Powers beyond our control; the feeling of dependence upon the Power or Powers; and entering into relations with the Power or Powers. According to one definition, " Religion is the belief in certain powers which to the emotional life of man are the cause of all existence, and of all that happens in nature and in human life."[2] Perhaps a better definition would be : " Religion is the sum-total of beliefs, rules of conduct, and rites governing the relations of man with a Power or Powers looked upon as transcendent."[3] A man's religion is his total reaction to life.

The charactristic feature of all theistic religions is a spontaneous belief in the superhuman, supernatural Being or God to whom man, even at the earliest stage of his evolution, felt prompted to make obeisance and offer acts of worship from a sense of dependence and fear. It might be imagined though, in the course of time this primitive reaction of man developed into one of awe and reverence thereby underscoring the unexpressed but basic monotheism of man's religious instinct.

In his essay on "The Religion of Earliest Man"[4] Rev. P. W. Schmidt, S.V.D., states categorically that the essence of the religion of primitive peoples is their belief in one Supreme Being and adds: "The results of this new discovery that monotheism is to be found in the most ancient religion, nay more, is the very heart of it, are diametrically opposed to the old evolutionist view that monotheism only appeared in later religions as a result of a long and complicated development."[5]

However, such an assumption is not uncontroversial. In "The Threshold of Religion",[6] R. R. Marett maintains that the assertion of a primitive monotheism cannot be proved and argues from the psychological stand-point that "the movement of the mind from the indefinite to the definite, the incoherent to the coherent, multiplicity to untiy is incomparably more probable than the reverse process".

Historically, it is true that the concept of God as well as of Religion has evolved through the millenia. The development of these concepts faihfully reflects the intellectual, moral and spiritual evolution of man. In primitive society, even assuming man's basic monotheism, his simplicity of mind and limited understanding had led him to accept and to believe in the existence, not necessarily of one all–controlling God, but of a multitude of spiritual beings who, he apparently thought, were concerned about his affairs and life and could either help or harm him. That was, in all probability, the origin of the religion and philosophy, if it might be described as such, of animism, "the primitive belief in spirits as the agency of the supernatural, rather than gods or a universal mystic power."[7]

Metaphysical or moral problems were not comprehensible to the primitive man and did not, accordingly, concern him. His constant preoccupation was with securing food and avoiding illness and physical danger to himself or his family or tribe. Invariably therefore he sought, through ritual and ceremonialism, to propitiate the spirits of his dead ancestors, in the first place, that they might protect him, but he worshipped too other spirits unconnencted with the dead or known objects, and the spirits believed to be directing the phenomena of nature such as the sun, moon, stars, rain and wind.

This animistic world of spirits permeated the entire physical world–men, animals, plants and things. All these, animate as well as inanimate, were thought to posses indwelling spirits or mystic power, which might perhaps account for the ancient, but possibly later, related beliefs and practices of fetishism and totemism.

Since everything in nature was regarded as having some mystic power, it was believed possible to transfer that power, by means of rituals, to artificial objects which then became fetishes. Sacrifices and offerings used to be made to a fetish to invoke its aid for the petitioner, as the Portuguese sailors discovered for themselves among the native tribes of the Guinea coast of Western Africa, and it was they who first used the term " fetish" to indicate such objects made of wood, cloth, etc., as were reverencced by the natives.

Likewise, in the early period of man's history, there was current a belief in some kind of a mystic bond uniting a clan to a particular animal or plant which, consequently, acquired a mysterious significance and came to be regarded by the clan as their totem or the emblem of the clan. " In the classic instance of the Australian tribes, clansmen held a theory of descent from their totem animal, performed magic ceremonies to replenish the earth with it, were forbidden to kill or eat it, and painted their bodies and weapons with tokens of their connection with it."[8] Totemism might well be considered to be a later development in religious thought as it points to man's life in the clan, a definitely forward stage in the evolutionary process.

However, it has been questioned whether totemism could at all be regarded as a religion. Sir J.G. Frazer, a noted authority on the subject, states :

> " Pure totemism is not in itself a religion at all; for the totems as such are not worshipped, they are in no sense deities, they are not propitiated with prayer and sacrifice.
> To speak therefore of a worship of totems pure and simple, as some writers do, is to betray a serious misapprehension of the facts."
> (Totemism and Exogomy, 1910, Vol. IV, p.27)"

Turning to animism then, it is a grass--roots religion, the starting point of all the historical forms of worship. Because of the unevolved and undiscriminating mind of the time, animism might be regarded as, in a sense, superimposed upon an underlying monotheistic tendency embedded in man's religious consciousness.

As the wheel of evolution moved on, the animistic belief in a multiplicity of spirits gradually developed into a belief in the plurality of gods or polytheism, an inevitable stage in the simple man's spiritual response to the forces and phenomena of nature. The earliest form of Vedic religion, possibly over 5,000 years old, was a kind of naturalistic polytheism. Radhakrishnan wrote : " The earliest seers of Vedic hymns delighted in sights of nature. Being essentially of a poetic temperament, they saw the things of nature with such intensity of feeling and force of imagination that the things became suffused with souls." [10] Polytheism, for which nature provided inspiration and sustenance, has been described as the stage or phase of the religious development of mankind in which the belief in and worship of many gods prevails. In the Vedic pantheon, the many gods can be classified as the gods of the sky represented by Sūrya, the sun-god; the gods of the air by Indra associated with rain; and the gods of the earth by Agni, the fire god. However, " an interesting feature of the Vedic polytheism is that there are indications of the supersession of one order of gods by another, the asuras by the devas" [11] which unmistakably reaffirms the primordial craving of the human soul to reach out to a god that is One and Supreme. " Where animism develops into polytheism, it may be viewed as a first stage in that evolution which leads to making the Divine Power the supreme agent who seeks order in nature and the good of humanity. " [12]

With man becoming gradually more reflective in the course of time, there is an unconscious effort within to penetrate behind the veil into the true nature of things. In India, this inborn tendency asserted itself during the early Vedic period when Varuna, one of the sky gods, was idealized and took precedence, in worship, over the other Vedic gods. Varuna was regarded as the most moral god possessed of such high attributes as omniscience, benevolence and the power to forgive sins. He became identified with Ṛta, the Indian concept of the Unchanging Reality that is responsible for law, order and justice in the world.

That would not imply, however, that Varuna displaced all the other gods. The cult of Varuna only points to a particular stage in man's religious development when, apparently, he was not satisfied unless he could exalt one god over the others. In the 19th century Max Müller described this tendency by the use of the term ' henotheism ' which meant worshipping one god as if he were the one and only god, though at the same time the existence of other gods was not denied. In the words of Max Müller himself: " To identify Indra, Agni and Varuṇa is one thing, it is syncretism; to address either Indra or Agni or Varuṇa as for the time being the only god in existence with an entire forgetfulness of all other gods, is quite another, and it was this phase, so fully developed in the hymns of the Veda, which I wished to mark definitely by a name of its own, calling it Henotheism".[13]

Other terms in use with a similar meaning as henotheism, are kathenotheism or "one god at a time" and monolatry which is the worship of one god whether or not the existence of other deities is granted.

It is indeed worthy of note that henotheism has been a characteristic development in the later history of polytheism not only in India but in the ancient religion of Egypt, Babylonia and Assyria, thus upholding the view that henotheism or kathenotheism was the historical precursor of monotheism which, according to Radhakrishnan, "is inevitable with any true conception of God."

The religion of ancient Egypt was markedly polytheistic. Like the early Vedic religion, it might be described as a polytheistic nature-worship with the sun as the principal figure of Divinity. The Egyptians worshipped, as divinities of lesser rank, the moon, the starry firmament and the earth, and also worshipped their great river, the Nile, as the emblem of the god Osiris, noted for benevolence to man. Their polytheism expressed itself, as in other ancient cultures, in the building of temples, worshipping idols and offering sacrifices to them.

The earliest religion of Babylonia too was polytheistic, but in ancient India there gradually grew in Egypt, Babylonia and Assyria a tendency to worship one god as being superior to others. Just as Varuṇa became the all-powerful god in Vedic India though existing side by side with the lesser gods, so was it in Egypt where a multiplicity of gods, the concept of Atum, the first god who created and set in order the whole world was prominet. In Babylonia every important town had its own tutelary deity who was regarded by the people of the town as having the highest claim on their worship, although that did not deter them from looking upon any other deity with the same holy deference. In Assyria, this monotheistic trend was evident in the worship of Asur, the principle of one central Divine figure. "Indeed, the worship of this god Asur was perhaps the nearest approach to an all-embracing monotheism which can be found in the Assyro-Babylonian religion."[14]

Meanwhile the soul of man – the tiny spark divine – persisted in its striving to know the one Supreme God. The religious world of polytheism, or even of henotheism, left him restless. His inner life would find peace and joy only when he could realize the one

God who has been platonically described as "the pure and unsullied Mind of the universe."

In India, however, the evolution of religious consciousness took on a philosophical and metaphysical direction. In the earlier Upaniṣads, the absolute, impersonal and eternal properties of the divine were very much stressed, which paved the way for Saṅkarācharya's non–dualistic philosophy, in the 7th century A. D., of the impersonal, intangible, unmanifest Reality or Brahman identical with the soul of man. "Tat tvam asi" (thou art that). However elevated such a concept might be in the realm of philosophy, Saṅkarāchārya's monism could not satisfy the common man's thirst for the God of love and mercy and therefore the Bhagavad-Gītā which, over a thousand years before Saṅkarāchārya, had described God "as a personal being, the Lord of the Universe, whose 'grace' (prasāda) requires the 'loving devotion' (bhakti) of his worshippers"[15] has ever remained the most valuable of the Hindu scriptures. For Saṅkarāchārya, of course, personal concepts of the Absolute belong to the sphere of illusion (māyā), but since for him "the world and individuality disappear upon enlightenment into the unmanifest Brahman and in reality only the Absolute without distinctions exists, Saṅkara has provided an instance of acosmism".[16]

In 1709 a new word "pantheism" was first used to describe a new concept of God. As the prefix 'pan' can suggest, pantheism signifies an all-embracing inclusiveness of God in the world as contrasted with his separateness emphasized in Judaism and

Christianity. In these religions God is the " Wholly Other ", but just as separate as the mind is from the body, or, in other words, not identical with the world of creation though immanent in it, far yet mystically near. Pantheism, on the other hand, stresses the identity between God and the world and in that sense is typically monistic. God is everything and everything God. Pantheism therefore stretches the idea of immanence of God in the world to the farthest limit and does not provide at all for his transcendence. In Judaism and Christianity, God is unquestionably both transcendent and immanent, and in that sense we might describe them as 'pantheistic', a term used to characterize the view that the world is a finite creation within the in finite being of God.

Since pantheism connotes an absolute, impersonal god, it is in tune with the Vedāntic concept of the Brahman, but when in the 12th century A.D. Rāmānuja, in opposition to Śaṅkarāchārya's interpretation of the Vedānta, expounded the doctrine of Vīśiṣt-Advaita or of the Supreme Transcendent Reality possessing at the same time the attributes of benevolence, wisdom and love, and recognised the separateness of individual souls and their capability of attaining the Transcendent amid the reality of the external universe, he was advocating a panentheistic View of God.

From of old man's quest for God - realisation has been a most scintillating aspect of his history on earth, and it has apparently led him, through different stage of development, to the belief in One Supreme Lord. The Bhāgavata faith of India inculcates devotion to the One Supreme Lord and self - sacrificing love in His service. Even Buddhism which at its inception had excluded the God-idea altogether, later turned theistic and in the Hīnayāna deified the founder himself. " The earliest Buddhist thought, as expressed and formulated by the Master himself, was consistently agnostic and, from its world-scheme, omitted the superhuman and the Divine. However, the human craving for an ideal or idealized object of love and homage was too strong for the remote aloofness and somewhat cold philosophy of the doctrine. The desire was met, and found its satisfaction, in the deification of Śākyamuni himself". The Mahāyāna, on the other hand, developed a whole hierarchy of divine beings among whom was Gautama no doubt, but the first place was taken by Amitābha (Amida), a deity of obscure origin and history, believed to possess the attributes of grace, mercy, wisdom and power. From a metaphysicial point of view Mahāyāna Buddhism can be said to approximate the monistic concept of the Braḥman, but the Buddhist theory of the Dharmakāya, the Divine Ruler immanent in the universe and manifesting Himself in the creation, has endowed it with rich monotheism approximating the Christian thought. The Dharmakāya is conceived of as having the qualities of personality, especially will, intelligence and love. "Amitābha Buddha that the Dharmakāya has chiefly manifested himself, and Amitābha therefore is the supreme object of religious homage and worship. The whole creation, however, is a manifastation of that Dharmakāya ; all are really now one in him, their union being darkened and abscured by ingnorance, prejudice and sin. In the final issue they will in the Dharmakāya find the light and their own true nature and be delivered from the bondage of present evil and suffering.''[17]

The Zoroastrian conception of God is also strongly monotheistic. Ahura Mazda is the supreme God whose most dominant attribute is 'spenta' or beneficence, " and this Beneficent Spirit is, in the Gathas, the great and sole creator. He made not only the light, but darkness as well; not merely the dawn and noontide, but midnight just as truly (Ys. 44^{5}). He is omniscient and omnipresent, the all-viewing Lord who cannot be deceived (46^{6} 45^{4} 29^{4}), the immutable, who remains evermore the same (31^{7})".[18]

Both the Zoroastrian tradition and the much older Vedic concept of Prajāpati are akin to the monotheism of Judaism. As Waxman states : "To the religious men in all times, God is not an abstract First Cause or a principle of motion but a Being who is active and has a definite relation to the world and man. Consequently, it follows from the very concept of one God that the world is His handiwork.''[19] The God of the Jews was an intensely personal God, a self-communicating God, interested in their well-being. In Genesis He revealed Himself not only as the Creator of heaven and earth but as the indefatigable Lover of man. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them" (Gen 1.27), and even their disobedience failed to erase His love of them though as the just God, divine justice had necessarily to be visited upon wrong-doing. " And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins, and clothed them" (Gen 3.21).

By intervening in Abraham's life, God entered into human history. He said to Abraham, "And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, make your name great, so that you will be a blessing" (Gen 12.2). He became the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and spoke through them to the people of Israel. To Moses God revealed His very name: Yaḥweh, "He who is" and in the revelation at Sinai He commanded: "You shall have no other gods before me", which suggests that even during the time of Moses not all Israelites were monotheists, but possibly worshipped idols and images of their polytheistic deities. Eventually, of course, as the result of the continuous teaching of the Prophets monotheism became the hallmark of Judaism later continued into Christianity and Islam. "Personality, implying a living Being, who thought, felt and willed, and who possessed all the characteristics of personal life is a distinctive feature of the God of the Old Testament throughout. But this being was spiritual, in the sense of being invisible to mortal eye and beyond all sensous apprehension."[20]

The God of Israel was supreme and exceedingly holy and righteous. The prophets from Amos onwards constantly stressed in their teachings the supremacy and might of Yahweh as well as His 'holiness' in its widest connotation, which included abhorrence of sin, punishment and of course forgiveness. They often referred to God as 'Lord of Hosts' and 'The Holy one of Israel'. And yet in Judaism the concept of God as Father is prominent for at every major turn of their history, as during the Exile or the Exodus, He acted as their God and Father to save them from themselves and from their enemies. Judaism therefore holds that the Torah which embodies the Divine Law is, like the Vedas to the Hindu, the Gospels to the Christian, or the Qurān to the Muhammadan, the revealed Law of God and hence immutable.

The Vedas, however, have imparted a uniqueness to Hinduism all its own. Hinduism cannot properly be described as one religion with a definite creed and a founder. It is rather a way of life that has evolved over thousands of years in response to the religious and philosophical urges of man, absorbing and assimilating in the process the śruti aspects or the essential spiritual truths of other religions as well. In India, as perhaps nowhere else in the world, religion and philosophy can be said to have grown out of each other. That is why Hinduism has always catered to the spiritual needs of man at all levels of development, embracing within its fold a multitude of beliefs and practices ranging from primitive animism to metaphysical monism.

Radhakrishnan wrote : "The gods of the Vedic religion are the reflections of the growing wants and needs, the mental groping and the heart-searching of man. The growth of religious thought as embodied in the hymns may be brought out by the mention of the typical gods : Dyaus, indicative of the first stage of nature worship; Varuṇa, the highly moral god a later day; Indra, the selfish god of conquest and domination ; Prajāpati, the god of the monotheists; and Brahman, the perfection of all these four lower stages. This progression is as much chronological as logical."[21]

One might not agree entirely with Radhakrishnan's conclusion about either the chronological or the logical order in the development of religious thought in India. It can be conceded that the Vedānta is the dominant philosophy of India and that the true Vedāntist considers himself to be one with the Brahman, but the quest for such union implies belief in a Supreme Power which logically is or ought to be personal for at the ultimate mystical stage there is no difference between the philosophical Brahman and the monotheistic God of the religious mind. Hence Vaishnavism and Śaivism, each with its monotheistic worship have found the widest religious expression among the Hindus, testifying to the fact that " the living potent force to which man turns in need is not his philosophy but the personal God who, by whatever name He is called, as Rama, Viṣnu, Kṛṣṇa, or many another, is conceived as the sovereign dispenser of favours and the ultimate source of power".[22]

Even the latter-day Hindu religious movements such as the Ārya-Samāj and the Brāhma Samāj preach pure monotheism. The Ārya Samājists ascribe to God attributes of mercifulness and grace and " the reverence which the followers of Brāhma Samāj profess for Christ and His teaching is deep and sincere, and the language they employ is not seldom such as would readily lend itself to Christian interpretation."[23]

The monotheism of Christiantiy is a continuation of the monotheism of Judaism. He is the same God to whom Jesus addressed the agonizing words from the Cross : " Abba, Father, all things are possible to thee; remove this cup from me; yet not what I will, but what thou wilt" (Mk. 14. 36). In Jesus' total surrender of Himself as a sacrifice for the redemption of man from sin lies the crux of the Christian idea of God. He is the God of infinite love and compassion who, because of it, became historically manifest in Christ. "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father"(Jn.1.14).

The God of The Old Testament was a righteous and holy God of power and might have rewarded the good and punished the wicked, and though not until about the first century B. C. there was any emphasis on an eternal life after death, the Prohets in their teachings constantly urged the people to be righteous and holy in preparation for the coming of the promised Messiah so that, heralding the beginning of Christ's redemptive mission on earth, John the Baptist could say: " Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt 3. 2).

It is an article of Christian faith that even as sin first entered human history through an act of disobedience, God's Grand Design of Salvation for man began to operate and in the course of the ages, conforming to man's mental and moral evolution, unfolded itself by stages through the different religious systems and philosophies throughout the world. Accordingly, every religion since antiquity, whether minor or major, has been part of the Grand Design, and the concept of a monotheistic God which alone could provide fulfilment to man's spiritual quest has steadily developed from the God of uprightness, justice and fear as in Judaism to the God of self-sacrificing love and forgiveness as in Christianity. In Islām which was founded in the seventh century A. D., this idea of the unity and continuity of religious thought is explained in characteristic language: "God's truth is continuous, and His Apostles from Adam, through Noah and Abraham down to the last of the Prophets, Muhammad, form one brotherhood" (S. 3.56).[24]

Like Judaism and Christianity Islām is a monotheistic religion which teaches belief in the unity, power, mercy and love of Allaḥ, the Creator. It has much in common with both the other religions. " The Qurān revelation has step by step, confirmed the Law of Moses and the Gospel of Jesus (S. 3 54)"[25] One would think, however, that the God of Islām is not as close to man as the God of Christianity in which the incarnation of Christ has conferred on man the brotherhood of Christ and the sonship of God in faith.

The God of Christianity looks upon man with the heart of a heavenly Father, eager to help and guide if only man in his turn will open his own heart to Him with its burden of sin in an act of humility and true repentance. " Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest " (Mt., 11.28). Christian monotheism, both in its immanence and in its transcendence, is best expressed in the words of St. Paul, " one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God, and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all " (Eph., 4.5-6).

In fact, the father-image of God is particularly prominent in Christianity. Christ himself taught his disciples to pray to ' Our Father in Heaven ' and also admonished them thus : " But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you". (Mt 6.6)

However, the God of Christianity is a triune God - God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit - three persons in one God. This doctrine of Trinity, is not a metaphysical speculation, nor can it be examined under the cold light of human reason however cultivated. It is a spiritual experience imbued in faith and vouchsafed to the pure in heart as all true religious experience is. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Mt. 5.8). St. Augustine taught that "the one and only and true God is a Trinity, and the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are rightly said and believed to be of one and the same substance or essence."[26]

Though not similar to the Christian belief in the triune God, we have in Hinduism the concept of Trimūrti. The evolutionary principle in the phenomenal world involves constant flux or change which in turn involves creation, preservation and destruction. If therefore God is the creator of the universe He is also the preserver and the destroyer at the same time. These are three aspects of the same God represented by Brahmā as the Creator, Viṣnu as the Preserver and Siva as the destroyer, and symbolize in the image of Trimūrti with three identical faces. "In the form of Brahmā he creates; his human from (i. e., Viṣnu) preserves; in his form as Rudra will he destroy. These are the three states of Prajāpati" (Mahābhārata.)

In the early Egyptian religion too there was the notion of a trinitarian divinity. In one of the hymns are the words : "There are all gods–Amon, Re and Ptah .... As Amon he is the hidden god, in Re, the god of the sun, he becomes visible; as Ptah, an earthly god, he is immanent in this world." [27]

The unique character of Christian doctrine of Trinity arises from its association with the incarnation of Christ who proclaimed in the course of his teaching that He and the Father are one and asked the Apostles after the Resurrection to await the coming of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son "This Christian faith in the incarnation of the divine word in the man Christ Jesus, with whom the believer is united through the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, constitutes the distinctive basis of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity."[28]

Accordingly, every single act of Christian worship starts with the words: IN THE NAME OF FATHER, AND OF THE SON AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

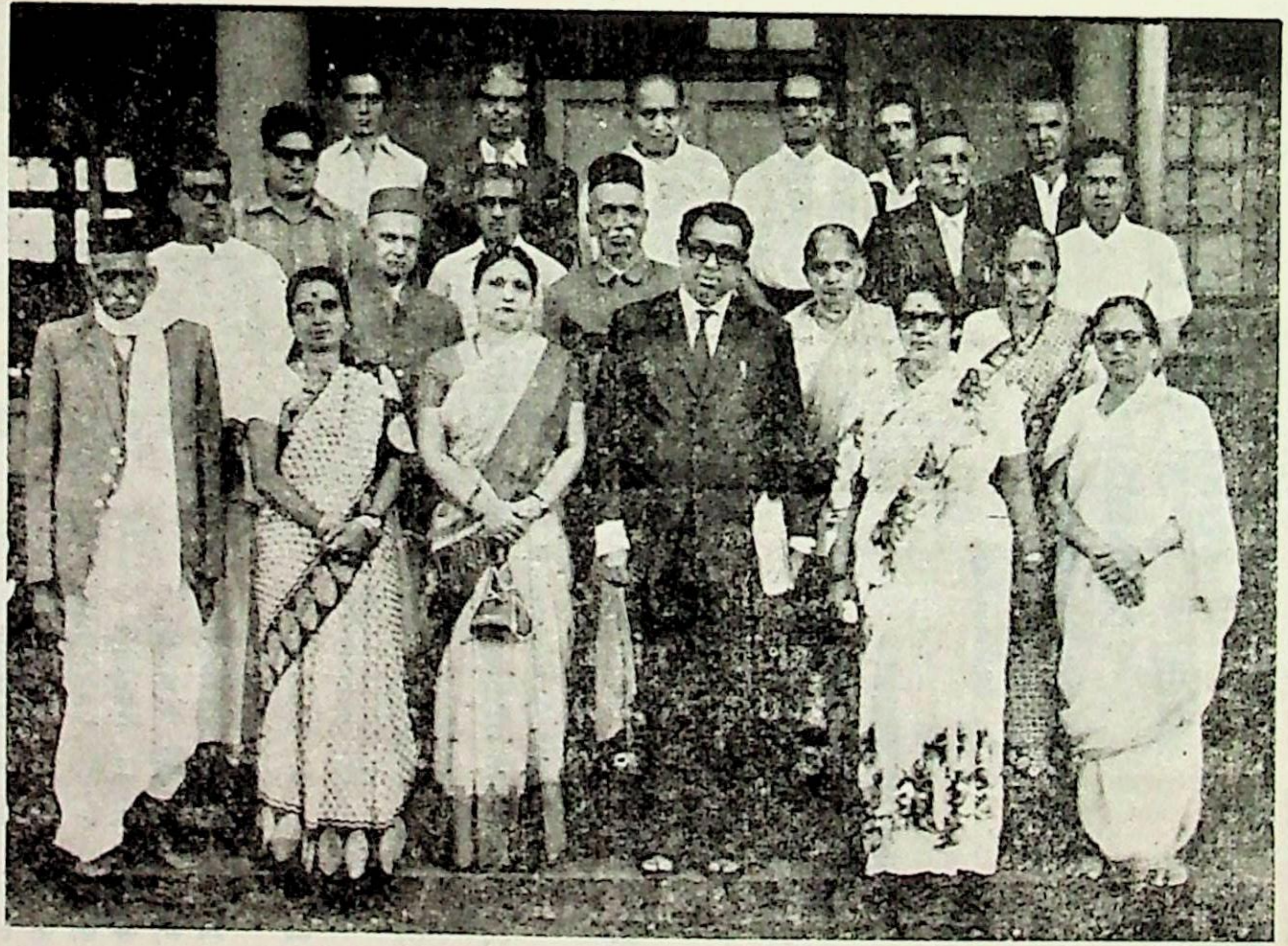
⁂

REFERENCES

1. Collier's Encyclopedia, Vol. 16
2. Prof. Max Schemidt-'Primitive Races of Mankind' P. 199- quoted from "Introduction to Studies in Comparative Religion" by Rev. E. C. Messenger (Catholic Truth Society, London).

3. Pere Grandmaison - 'Christus ', P. 7-Ibid.
4. Studies in Comparative Religion-Catholic Truth Society, London.
5. Ibid.
6. R. R. Marett-'The Threshold of Religion' P.15–quoted from 'Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics', Vol. X
7. Collier's Encyclopedia, Vol. 16
8. ----
9. Sir J. G. Frazer-'Totemism and Exogamy', 1910, Vol IV· P. 27-quoted from "Introduction to Studies in Comparative Religion," by Rev. E. C. Messenger (Catholic Truth Society, London).
10. S. Radhakrishnan-'Indian Philosophy' Vol. I (L. Van Leer & Co , N. V. 1948)
11. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. X.
12. Encyclopaeda of Religion and Ethics, Vol. I.
13 Friedrich Max Muller-"The Six Systems of Indian philosophy" (Associated Publishing House, New Delhi, 1973)
14. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. VI
15. The Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, Vol. 3
16. New Encyclopaedia Britannica-Macropaedia, Vol. 13.
17. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. VI
18. Idid.
19 Meyer Waxman-"Judaism Religion and Ethics"
20 Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol VI
21. S. Radhakrishnan- "Indian Philosophy," Vol I
22. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol VI
23. Ibid.
24. A. Yusuf Ali-"The Message of Islam" (John Murray, London, 1940)
25. Ibid.
26. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. VI
27. Encyclopaedia Britannica-Macropaedia, Vol XII
28. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. XII.

Sou. Padma Kulkarni and guests in Gurudev Mandir on 4-11-1976



Front row 1) Shri K. D. Sangoram 2) Mrs. Mahindrakar 3) Mrs. Dubhashi
4) Shri P. R. Dubhashi 5) Mrs. Padma Kulkarni 6) Mrs. Chhatre

THE CONCEPT OF KARMA

Dr, S. R. Talghatti.

1. '*Karma*' is one of the most important concepts in Indian philosophy, especially in Indian moral philosophy. It is involved in many philosophical contexts right from the *Vedās* down the history of Indian philosophy. This makes it imperative to understand the philosophical idea of '*Karma*' as developed by Indian thinkers.

2 '*Karma*' literally means 'action' or 'deed'. In this general sense, it is the sing of life itself. One cannot 'live' without doing 'action'. This is clearly recognised by Indian thinkers as is obvious from the following quotations :

> "Doing deeds alone, here, one may desire to live a hundred years". (Īśa.2).
> "None can ever remain actionless even for a moment" (B. G. II. 5).

3. '*Karma*', in a wider sense, denotes all the activities found in the universe, and not only by the living creatures. It is in this sense that *Karma* is said, by the *Gītā*, to have originated in the *Brahma*. ("Action grows from *Brahma*" B. G., 3. 15) From this point of

view, Ṛ*ta* is the Law, groverning the '*Karma*' of the whole universe. It is again in this sense that '*Karma*' is said to be 'beginningless' (*Anādi*) (cf. *Vedānta Sūtra* 2-1-35).

As applied to man himself *Karma* may include physiological activities as well as deliberate actions. But it is to the latter, that is, the willed actions, that the term *Karma* properly applies. *Praśastapāda* distinguishes between automatic activities of an organism and voluntary action proper, between '*Jīvana pūrvaka prayatna* and '*Icchā-dveṣa pūrvaka prayatna*'. (cf. commentary on V. S., *Guṇagrantha.*)

"*Dinakari*" (commentary on *Viśvanātha*'s *Siddhānta-muktāvali*' by *Mahādeva* and *Dinakara Bhaṭṭa*) - also distinguishes three kinds of *Kṛti* or *prayatna*, viz.,

(a) *Pravṛtti*, i. e., positive volition,
(b) *Nivṛtti*, i. e., negative volition, and
(c) *Jīvanayoni prayatna*, i. e., 'activities' of living beings or organic activities-which are not '*Svecchādhīnamatkṛtisādhya*'- i. e., capable of being subject to choice.

Moral philosophy is concerned with only this kind of *Karma*, that is, voluntary behaviour or conduct. Normally such behaviour is purposive. Hence *Sarvadarśana Saṅgraha* defines *Karma* as "that which is done by those who seek certain fruits or results". (*Kriyate phalārthibhiriti Karma*). This however need not go against the doctrine of 'desireless action', since it is only a broader view of *Karma* as it is ordinarily observed.

4. This analysis of volition is important in

this context. We shall note only the salient features of its analysis by Indian thinkers. There are two kinds of analysis, one by the *Prabhākara* and the other by the *Bhāṭṭa* school and the *Nyāya*.* According to *Prabhākara* volition is analysable into-

a) *KrāyatāJñāna*, i. e., consciousness of something to be done;
b) *Cikīrṣā*, i. e., the desire to do it, implying *Kṛtisādhyatā Jñāna*, or the consciousness that it can be done;
c) *Pravṛtti* (or *Kṛti*), the act of volition;
d) *Ceṣṭā*, i. e., bodily activity or motor impulses, and
e) *kriyā*, i. e., the act, regarded objectively.

KaryatāJñāna may have two meanings, as pointed out by *Gāgā Bhaṭṭa* (*Bhāṭṭa Cintāmaṇi*), viz.- (a) practicableness of act, and (b) obligatoriness of act. (*kartum śakyate*' and '*avaśyam kartavyam*'). *Prabhākara* has the latter (b) in mind, as (a) is included in '*Cikīrṣā*' as '*kṛtisādhyatā Jñāna*'. Further, in volition we also have '*svaviśeṣaṇavattā pratisandhāna*,' i. e., reprsentation of something as *Svāviśeṣaṇa* or as specifying the self. This analysis does not invole any reference to the notions of 'good' or 'evil' (*iṣṭa* or *aniṣṭa*).

According to *Nyāya* as presented by *Viśvanātha* the conditions of volition are -

a) *Cikīrṣā*, desire to do something;
b) *Kṛtisādhyatā Jñāna*, cognition that it can be done;

---

* cf. "Siddhāntamuktāvali"-by Viśvanātha. also "The Ethics of the Hindus," by S. K Mitra, ch. I.

c) *Iṣṭasādhanatā Jñāna*, i. e., cognition that it is conducive to my good, with ‘ *balavadaniṣṭānanubandhitva Jñānābhāva*,’ or absence of cognition of stronger evil; and

d) *Upādānapratyakṣa*, perception of the matter or stuff out of which thing is to be done.

This view differs from the first primarily in its reference to ‘ *iṣṭasādhanatāJñāna* ’ as a necessary condition of volition.

5. Karmas are classified in different ways. (The topic of ‘ Karma ’, in the context of ‘ *Dharma* ’, is dealt with extensively in the *Mīmāṁsā* system). Acts are either *primary* or *subsidiary*. (*Artha Karma* and *Guṇa Karma*). Those acts which are seen to produce visible results justifying their prescription, are subsidiary; while, those which do not produce visible results, but only ‘ *Apūrva* ’ are primary.

Still other classification divides acts into ‘ *laukika* ’ and ‘ *vaidika* ’. The latter are divided into a) Enjoined acts (*vidhi*), b) Forbidden acts (*Niṣedha*), and c) Prescribed and forbidden – both at different times. The positive acts are subdivided into (a1) *Yāga*- sacrifice or offering to a deity; (a2) *Homa* – offering to fire; and (a3) *Dāna* - giving away as alms.

Another important classification is –

1) *Kratvartha* - act helping the fulfilment of sacrifice;

2) *Puruṣārtha* – act accomplishing the *end* desired by the agent; and

3) Others – (neither *Kratvartha* nor *puruṣārtha*)

Some admit only (1) and (2), and not (3).

One more classification is –
1) *Prakṛti*, Archetypal; 2) *Vikṛti*, Ectypal; 3) *Prakṛti* – *Vikṛti* - partaking of the nature of both archetypal, and ectypal; and 4) *na prakṛti na vikṛti*- neither archetypal, nor ectypal. (We are here reminded of the classification of the *Sāṅkhya* principles).

Another important classification is –
1) *Nitya* – to be always done, i. e., categorical;
2) *Naimittika* – Contingent or occasional; and
3) *Kāmya* – purposive (or hypothetical).

The most important classification, especially from the point of view of the ' Law of Karma', is –a) *kriyamāṇa karma*; b) *Sañcita karma*, and c) *Prārabdha karma*, that is a) the *karma* in its formative period (being done), b) *karma* in its stored condition; and c) *karma* that has started bearing fruit. This classification seems to be very intimately related with the concept of '*Apūrva* ' in the system of *Pūrva Mīmāṁsā*. *

One more significant classification is – *kāyika* (bodily), *Vācika* (verbal), and *Manasika* (mental). This classification is philosophically very significant.

The *vaidika karmas*, of which the above are the classifications, stand more or less for ' duties '. They are not merely deeds but deeds viewed morally, so to say.

6. In the *Bhagavadgītā*, we find a very interesting as well as important classification of *Karmas*. The words used by *Gītā* are - ' *karma* ', '*vikarma*' and '*akarma*'. (B. G., IV. 17). Rough translations of these are ' duty ', ' prohibited act ', and ' inaction'

respectively. But in the light of the ' logic of action ' as discussed in the *Gītā*, we can understand these concepts in a philosophically more significant way, by taking them to mean - ' act in general ' ' specific or peculiar act ' and ' non-action' respectively. Here, I have followed *Shri. Vinoba Bhave* in giving the meaning of ' *vikarma* ' as ' peculiar act ' like *yajña*, *dāna*, *tapa* etc. . This is diametrically opposed to its meaning given traditionally. The notion of ' *akarma* ' practically involves the whole of the philosophy of the *Gītā*, especially its *karma yoga*.

Another *Gītā*-classification of Karmas is in terms of *tri-guṇas*, viz. - *Sāttvika*, *Rjasika*, and *Tāmasika*. In fact they represent not a classification, but the three morally significant ways in which *Karma* can be done.

Before we discuss the ' law of Karma ', Let us mention the grounds, given by *Mimāṁsā* (*Sūtras*) for differentiations among acts. They are six - 1) different words; 2) Repetition of verb; 3) Number (of objects etc.); 4) Accessory details; 5) Context ; and 6) Name. We need not go into the details of all these. Suffice it to note that though these principles are mentioned in the context of *vaidika* acts, they can be discussed as general principles of differentiations among acts.

7. There is a very important view developed about *karma*, which is known as the ' Law of Karma' (*Karma Siddhānta*.). It is very difficult to trace a definite and complete statement of this Law. But its roots seem to be ancient enough. The 'Law of Karma',

simply stated, is that : " Every *karma* or act has its own result, and that the nature of the result is detemined by that of the *karma*". In short, it is a philosophical version of the saying-'as you sow, so you reap;' there is no escape. Though it is not quite obvious, the concepts of immortality and rebirth are intimately involved in this law. Further, the law also refers to the fact that every *karma*, good or bad, is binding to the agent. He must reap the fruit thereof. This idea of *karma's* capacity to bear fruit and bind man, is at the basis of *Vedic* injunctions as understood by the *Mīmāṁsā* School. The law, however, presupposes that activities are undertakan for some purpose, moved by some desire. The Ātmā, after discarding one body attains another according to the '*karma*' and the 'desire' with which it is done. As *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* says-"This Ātmā attains rebirth according to its *karma* and behaviour. That one doing good, becomes good, doing evil, becomes evil .... hence it is siad that this *puruṣa* is of the nature of desire. Will follows desire, *karma* follows will and fruit follows *karma*" (Br., 4. 4, 3-5) As *kauṣītakī upaniṣad* says–man is " reborn according as is *karma* and knowledge". (Kau., 1.2)

As I said, the *Law of karma* applies only to the purposive actions. But the *karmas* of the man from whose heart all the traces of desire have gone, are like burnt seeds unable to bear fruits, and therfore, to bind him to the otherwise eternal cycle of births and deaths. As is said "one who does not desire, all his desires having been fulfilled, desires only his self, and being *Brahma*, attains *Brahma* (after this life); his *prāṇas* do not leave him". (Bṛh., 4. 4. 7-9)

This clearly shows that it is in fact the '*kāma*' or desire (*tṛṣṇā* etc.) which is really binding, and not the bare mechanics of activity. The source of the doctrine of *karma-yoga* as expounded in the *Bhagavadgītā* is to be found here. It is the secret of how '*karma*' becomes '*akarma*' Any serious analysis of the notion of *karma* must take this view into account.

8. The importance of the notion of 'desire' or 'purpose', in the analysis of '*karma*' is also to be found in the *Mīmāṁsā* analysis of the concept of '*Apūrva*'. The arguments for '*Apūrva* point out that the *vaidika* injunctions like "Desiring Heaven, one should perform sacrifice", will be meaningful only if there is some link between the perishable 'act', sacrifice and the 'result', heaven, which is brought about, long time after the sacrifice is over. This link is provided by '*Apūrva*' which is a potency or a capacity to bring about the respective result. Thus, *Apūrva* is the potency, created by performing sacrifice, to attain Heaven. This potency attaches itself to the Agent, as the Act is ephemeral. It brings about its result when it is ripe. '*Apūrva*' thus strengthens the Law of *karma* and is strengthened by it. Both are necessarily connected with the 'result' or 'fruit'. When we generalize this view of *Apūrva* so as to make it applicable to all actions, we get the principle through which *Law of karma* operates.

In this context, the division of *Karmas* into *Kriyamāṇa*, *Sañcita* and *Prārabdha* is significant. In fact these are not different kinds of *karma*, but the different stages of the same *karma*. When a *karma* is being done, it is in the stage of *Kriyamāṇa*; the stage of its storage is *sañcita*; and when it starts bearing fruit, it is the stage of *prārabdha*. Thus, it is the *prārabdha* which is not fate, but the *karma* of our own making that is responsible for whatever we experience in life. The so called *Law of Karma* is a bold attempt to explain rationally all that happens to man on the basis of what he does. It is, in fact of the nature of a causal hypothesis, which relates *Karma* and its result as cause and effect.

The cycle of *karma* and *phala*, as also the consequent cycle of life and death will continue eternally, on this hypothesis, if it is not broken also at some point. The cycle presupposes rebirth, and thereby, immortality of soul. This is really *saṁsāra* or *Saṁsaraṇa* of the soul. In this context, breaking of it will be the '*Mokṣa*'. In order to make *Mokṣa* possible, one has to conceive of the possibility of *Karma* not bearing fruit. And it is precisely here that the notion of 'desirelessness' or 'attachmentlessness' comes into prominence. The *karma-yoga* of the *Gītā* is nothing but the way out of this cycle, the way which neutralizes *Karma*, makes it impotent, as it were, to bear fruit. It shows that the sting of *Karma* is 'desire', an attachment to its fruit, without which it is as good as a '*akarma*'.

The *Law of Karma* is very often misunderstood; it is taken to be fatalism. This is just the opposite of what it really is. It is '*Karmavāda*' and not '*daivavāda*'. '*Daiva*' or fate is not some external agency – governing our life. It is nothing but the *Prārabdha Karma*, the *karma* that has started fructifying. As *Yoga Vaśiṣṭha* puts it –

प्राक्तनं पोरुषं तद्दै दैवशब्देन कथ्यते । 2·6·35

In other words, man is his own architect, and is free either to make or to mar his career.

9. From the above discussion it becomes at once clear that the concept of *Karma* is much more complex than it appears to be at the outset. Indian thinkers prefer an intentionalistic account of *karma* to a behaviouristic (mechanistic) one. They link the physical action to the intention or desire or purpose etc. on the one hand, and to the result on the other hand. Of the two again, the intention or desire is more important, as the fruit or result is due to it. If *karma* is binding, as surely it is, that is because of man's psychological involvement in it. If he severs this psychological bond, *karma*, in its sheer physical aspect, is as harmless as it can be. Thus, *Karma* is not merely physical activity, a movement, but a willed action with all its psychological paraphernalia. Its purposiveness is taken for granted. This analysis of *Karma* applies to all kinds of *Karma* including moral actions. And if action is purposive in some way or the other, moral action must also be so.

Now the *Mīmāṁsā* discussion of the two kinds of *Karma*, viz., *Kratvartha* and *Puruṣārtha* (i. e. subserving the purpose of man), makes it clear that happiness is the purpose of man. *Svarga* itself is nothing but the world of happiness. Since, even sacrifices are to be performed in order to attain *Svarga*, that is, happiness, we can say that the whole realm of *karmas* is governed by the goal of happiness. Desire for happiness is the motive force of *karma*.

10. The notion of *karma* is, thus, not to be understood only in its physical aspect; other factors

like desire (*icchā*) knowledge (*kratu*), and fruit or result (*phala*) are also to be considered as almost constitutive of *karma*. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka upaniṣad* says- "Man verily is desire-formed (full of desire); as is his desire, so is his thought; as is thought, so he does action; as he does action, so he attains (the fruit)."* This is true especially when we speak of *Karma* as binding, of the Law of *Karma* and so on. This is human action, (*pauruṣa karma*), influenced by desire and knowledge, and leading necessarily to its results. The cycle is broken, as said earlier, by removing 'desire' and attachment to the fruit.

Further, *Karma* is not something given once for all. Though the '*prārabdha*' is to be exhausted only by tasting its fruits, still, the '*Sañcita*' can be modified by what we add to it-the '*Kriyamāṇa*'-which in turn is our own creation. Man is thus a free agent. He is doubly free; firstly he is free to decide whether to be bound by desired action or be free of it by giving up desire. Secondly he is free, if bound, to do either good or bad actions, thereby binding himself to suffer either good or bad results. After all, man is the maker of *Karma*, its agent, and not the *Karma* that of man. Ultimately, it is the agent, the doer who invites fruits and not the *karma* which is lifeless-material. This point is very beautifully put forth by Śri. Ramaṇa Maharṣi as-

> " By the order of the doer is the fruit attained; is *Karma* superior ? (Nay) It is only material."**

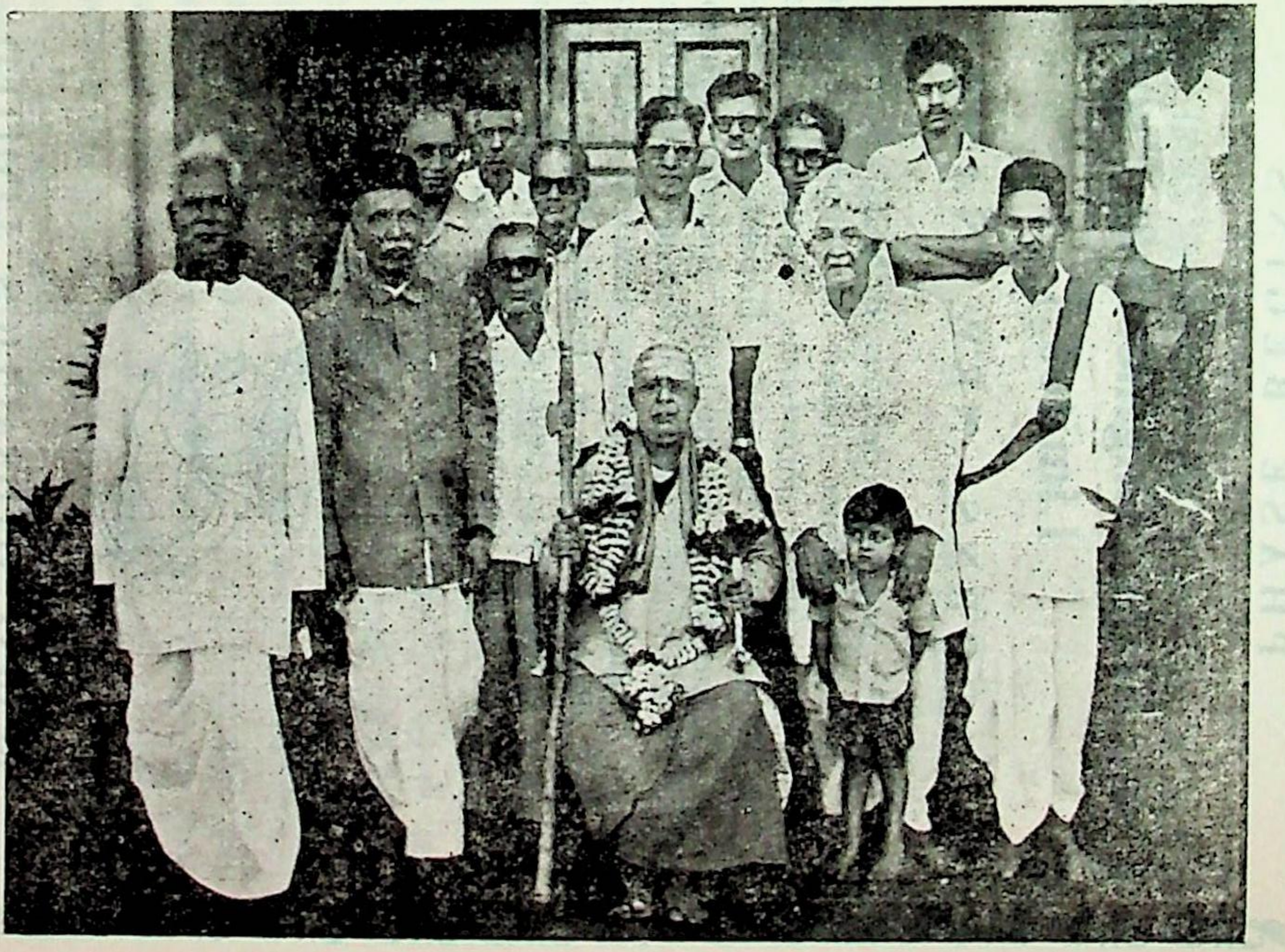
---

* काममय एवायं पुरुष इति । स यथाकामो भवति तत्क्रतुर्भवति । यत्क्रतुर्भवति तत् कर्म कुरुते। यत् कर्म कुरुते । तत् अभिसंपद्यते । 4.4.5.

** कर्तुराज्ञया प्राप्यते फलं । कर्म कि पर कर्म तज्जडम् ॥ *Upadeśasāra*, 1

● ● ●

His Holiness Shri Swamiji of Dabholi Math
in Gurudev Mandir :



NATURE AND DESTINY OF THE FINITE SOUL

(Visishtadvaita View)

Dr. M. N. Narasimhan,
M. A., Ph. D.

(Continued from Vol 10, No 2)

The Finite Self-Is A Part (Amsa) Of Brahman.

What is the true nature of the Finite Being? Is it absolutely different from Brahman? Or is it something else other than Brahman itself in so far as under the influence of error? Or is it Brahman in so far as determined by a limiting adjunct (upadhi) or is it a part of Brahman? The Acharya discusses each one of the above questions in his Suthrabhashya. He quotes the text ' They are two, the one knowing and other not knowing, both unborn; the one, the strong and the other weak,"[34] and comments that 'to maintain that they are one is to convey a contradiction as if it were to say water the ground with fire and therefore must be understood in some secondary metaphorical sense '.[35] The notion of the jiva on the prakara of Isvara is not due to the beginningless limiting adjuncts (upadhis). It is not mere erroneous imagination. If it is, its destruction of bondage and release cannot be explained. The Acharya draws attention to declaration of difference as well as of unity by the texts (bheda and abheda srutis). While the latter speak of unity, the former dwell on the distinction between the Creator and the creature, the Ruler and the ruled, the All- knowing and the ignorant, the Independent and the dependent, the Pure and the impure, that which is endowed with holy qualities and that which possesses qualities of the opposite kind.[36]

---

[34] Svetasvatara Upanishad - I-9

[35] Sri Bhashya - Translated by Thibaut. S. B. E, Vol. 48 - P. 559-560.

Ordinarily by part we mean that which constitutes the part of the extension of something. If the jiva is supposed to be part in this sense. all the imperfections of the Finite will have to be transferred to Brahman. Neither can we explain part to mean piece (khanda) for Brahman does not admit of being divided into pieces (khanda).

'Part' does not have, however to Ramanuja, quantitative singificance. The individual self is a part of the Highest self as the light issuing from a luminous thing such as fire or the sun is a part of that body. In his commentary on the Vedanta Suthras he explains parts as the attributes or modes of Brahman. This does not mean that they are mere adjectives without individuality. The jiva as an amsa of Isvara or the Lord is kept in relation of the principle of coordination (Samanadhikarana). The latter explains the relation between the subject and predicate in any judgment in terms of co-ordination than contradiction.

---

[36] Ibid., Page 560

According to Ramanuja a judgment does not establish bare identity but predicates co-ordination of different elements. A contentless cognition is really unthinkable and is a mere abstraction. Since the attribute always inheres in a substance it is called its mode. The latter is vitally related to the substance and thereby shares its substantiality It is its attribute, a sui generis attribute or aprithak siddha viseshana. The jiva, thus, is a mode or Prakara of the Lord, a mode of Isvara sharing in His substantiality.

Ramanuja's thesis that the Infinite and the Finite are distinct reals but not opposites, that they are distinguishable but not divisible not only explains the metaphysical nature of the jiva but also makes clear the ground for a consistent system of ethics. The world of matter and souls exist in the Lord in an unmanifest form prior to the creation of the world. Prakrti exists in Him in subtle form devoid of all qualities. In fact in its evolved form it differs so much from its antecedent state that it appears that Brahman cannot be regarded as existing in a state of unity before creation. To the question whether the same is true of the jiva also, whether the individual self exists prior to creation emptied of its distinctive nature, i. e. involving a complete suppression of individuality, the Acharya gives an emphatic no in his Bhashya. Such a change even in its state does not imply change of the type material substances undergo. By ' other state ' is meant the contraction and expansion of intelligence. Prior to creation, the selves exist with their intelligence, contracted. The Lord conjoins them to the material principle and from thence proceeds evolution due to the mutual influence of matter and soul under the guidance of the Supreme Being. One may question here why the 'sleeping self' is disturbed. The Acharya replies, it is to provide opportunity to the selves either to suffer punishment or enjoy reward and thus become fit for final release. It is the avowed decision of the Lord as the Hound of Heaven ever to increase the happiness of the jiva to the highest degree and to this end it is instrumental that He should reprove and reject the infiite and intolerableness of sins which accumulate in the course of beginningless and endless aeons and check the tendency on its part to transgress His laws '[37].

Creation, then, according to Ramanuja is not an accidental mishap but is the dayakarya of the Lord. The self gets connected with a body suited to wear out its past deserts. In its essential nature it is akin to the Lord. It possesses all the auspicious qualties of Brahman. But when conjoined to matter, its past deserts conceal its real nature. Contact with matter gives it name and form and thus begins the cycle of endless births and deaths. Though its essential nature is not affected, yet its knowledge and bliss get contracted. It suffers evil in the world and being subject to all states -waking, dreaming, deep sleep and swoon, subject to karma, mistakes and misuses, the freedom of action given to it by the Lord (dattasvatantrya) for licentious ness, indulges in the fleeting frivolities of life and thus becomes a willing victim to sense Inclinations.

The Acharya recognises four kinds of souls. They are :

1. The celestial or the super human beings consisting

---

37. Ibid, Page 541

of demigods, demons, ghosts (such as deva, asura, gandharva, siddha, kinnara, vidyadhara, kumpurusha, yaksha, Rakshasas and pisacas.

2. Human beings

3. Animals Including beasts, birds, crawling and creeping insects, etc.

4. Stationary beings (Sthavara).

Though description of the other species than the human beings is not given in great detail, the latter are described as possessing a body, fivefold breath and eleven organs. The first of these is made up of all the five elements in which water preponderates. Though breath is regarded, in essence, the same as mind, yet it is mind existing in a different condition and is not to be considered as mind itself or a function of it. Further, it is not an element of the material world but an instrument of the soul like eye or ear. Each of the fivefold breaths has its name though in reality all of them constitute one. The five names are Prana, Apana, Vyana, Udana and Samana. The Five organs for doing work, the five outer organs of sense and Manas, i. e. the inner organ are considered to constitute the eleven organs. The five organs of work do functions like seizing, going and so on. The five outer organs of sense are concerned with functions like seeing, hearing etc. The outer organs give rise to knowledge when contacted with the external objects. Manas gives rise to the knowledge at the inner states like pleasure, pain, etc. Manas cannot have the Knowledge of the outer world. But it has the three functions of adhyavasa or decision abhimana or consciousness of the self and chintana or the reflection of the self. With reference to the above three functions, the one Manas is called Bhuddi, Ahamkara, and Citta respectively. The above, including Manas, are material in character as they are the products of the transmutations of matter. They are not made of gross elements. While the Manas is made of the first element (Buddhi), the others are made up of subtle elements.

All the organs inclusive of Manas are held to be atomic in size. Further each one of them is considered to be ruled by a deity. For example, speech is said to be ruled by fire; the eye by sun, the breath by mind and so on. The deities are said to be controlled by the Individual Selves. But this is not to make the self all powerful, as both the deities and the self have their origin in the wish of Brahman.

The individual has several states of experience like working, sleep, dream, deep sleep and swoon. In the state of dream the self lies in the vein called Hita. Experiences of this state are said to forebode the good or ill to come. They are considered as retribution for the acts of minor importance. In deep sleep free from dream the self disconnects itself from the body and gets a glimpse of Brahman. In ' far deep sleep ' it gets into the state similar to release. Only it does not become all knowing and enjoy everlasting bliss as after sleep it wakes up and returns to samsaric experience. The seeds of Avidya are responsible for such a return. Advaita makes Avidya a God destroying and world negating principle. But for Ramanuja Avidya or Maya is the lila (sport) of the Lord. It is the Lord's power by which the evil wayward-will of the jiva forgets its home in the Absolute and enticed by Prakrti gets itself caught in the cycle of births and deaths, pleasure and pain. Such a fall from spirituals gathers momentum and makes it pay the penalty of endless suffering. Avidya generates abhimana. The latter gives rise to karma - the desire for worldly pursuits. The latter in turn generates anger and hatred. The result is the loss of reason and this tethers the jiva to Samsara. The Acharya regards that such failure to accomplish the satisfaction of senses and the consequent enragement and loss of balance of prospective - the loss of mental equillibrium as the greatest catastrophe that can befall the jiva. In his commentary on the Gita, he says that the above is the sole cause of all its suffering and misery. Confusion feeds confusion and the end is the moral and spiritual death of the individual. While the lower animals struggle to gratify a single sense man is allured by the cumulative chain and solicitation of the five senses. From cradle to coffin the jiva's mind gets haunted by fear and a sense of insecurity. The rosy romance of the youth fades and gives way to the gloom of old age and death. The temporary adventures of the unstable world induce in the empirical self a mood of sickmindedness. Disappointments increase. Life looses its zest. The feeling of world weariness creeps on the soul. Such a feeling of despondency is not a matter for despair and Pessimism. The Acharya says all these are the preplanned sport of the Divine Designer. " Even as the All-loving father, the Great Isvara, does not force His presence on the individual Self, not yet ripe to receive Him. With infinite patience, He waits and watches the struggle of the Self in Samasara since the struggle is necessary for the full unfoldment of the faculties of the Self.' [38] The souls are made to suffer pain of the most dreadful kind. No doubt the Lord creates them. But he has also given them a code of conduct explaining the 'do's and don'ts.' They are allowed to apply their wishes to works either good or evil. They have the power of free choice and so when they act, they are responsible for the consequences too.[39]

---

[38] Ibid., Page 538

One may question whether the individual self is free to act as it pleases. The Acharya replies that all activity proceeds from the Lord. This is borne out by the Gita that says 'He dwells the heart of all beings, moving and not moving. As their indweller, He directs them from within, as if mounted on a machine'.[40] The jiva is free to act only to the extent to which volition is needed for any action. The favour of granting permission for such action is the privilege of the Lord.

Following the scripture, the Svetasvatara, Ramanuja points out that the way for release from all fetters of worldly existence is by obtaining the knowledge of Brahman. Scripture is the means for such knowledge. He makes clear that mere works enjoined in the Karma Mimamsa portion of the Vedas bear fruits that are limited and passing. For deathlessness the study of Upanishads or the Sariraka Mimamsa must be pursued. Unlike Sankara he does not maintain that the mere knowledge that the world is unreal is sufficient. One must know that Immanence is a reality, an actual implication with a really existing

---

39. Ibid.,. Page 439

40. Bhagavadgita, XVIII - 61

matter. So instead of getting away from it, he must live in it and realise Brahman through it. The Acharya differs from Shankara in the origin, meaning, nature, content and goal of Avidya also. While to Shankara Avidya is what produces illusory appearance, for Ramanuja it is the will of the Lord that is responsible for Avidya. The latter engrosses the individual in action that either pleases or displeases Him leading to bring His favour or incurring His displeasure. Knowledge should put an end to avidya that inflates the ego in the individual and makes it regard itself as the free agent to act.

The Acharya draws attention to the two interpretatations of the Vedanta texts-knowledge of the Vedanta texts as a means to release and knowledge of texts as describing the natue of Brahman. To him knowledege of the texts is of the former type. He quotes many Upanishads in the Suthra Bhashya to support his view and concludes that knowledge intended to be enjoined as the means to final release is of the nature of meditation.

Meditation to Ramanuja means " Steady remembrance ". It is as the Upanishads say uninterrupted remembrances ' like the flow of oil '. Such steady remembrance he calls Bhakti.

In the benedictory verse of his work Sribhashya he defines Bhakti as knowledge " fructified into intense devotion " (Semushi bhaktirupa).[41] Again in his other work Vedartha Sangraha he explains it as a particular kind of knowledge which one is infinitely fond of and which leads to the extinc-

---

41. Sribhashya, 1-1-1

tion of all other interests and desires. Such knowledge grows day by day and becomes constant and intense by repetition. To accomplish the said type of knowledge religious duties are enjoined to be performed without any desire for reward and with the sole object of propitiating the Supreme. This, Ramanuja considers to be, the true import of the text 'they seek to know through the sacrifice'. He also draws attention to the Gita that says 'the work of sacrifice, giving and austerities is not to be relinquished; for they are purifying to the thoughtful ....' He from whom all things proceed .... worshipping Him with proper works, man attains perfection.'[42]

Following the Vakyakara Tanka, the Acharya lays down the following conditions as necessary for meditation.

1. Viveka - keeping the body clean unpolluted by unclean food.
2. Vimoha – absence of attachment.
3. Abhyasa - repeated reflection.
4. Kriya - performance of religious works.
5. Kalyana - good conduct
6. Anavasada - freedom from dejection.
7. Anuddharsha - freedom from exaltation.

The above deepen devotion and enhance the intense love of the Finite for the Lord. The true devotee feels it difficult and impossible to support existence for even a moment without being engaged in singing the Lord's Holy names and prostrating before Him. Ramanuja writes in the Gita Bhashya " The devotee repeats and calls upon the names that connote the different distinguishing attributes of the Lord's nature".[43] His frame quivering and hairs bristling with joy, his voice thrilled in holy excitement utters broken speech and constantly repeat in yearning notes such names as Narayana, Krishna, Vasudeva. With equal zeal ... . they prostrate in united concentrated devotion and worship. Ever and incessantly praying to be eternallv united to the Lord, they ever mediate on Him and worship Him with the vivid and fervent appeal that in holy service they may realise their true atman, namely complete abasement and abnegation. Intense devotion purges the individual of all egoity, generates humility and the sense of duty–that it lives not for itself but for the Lord. It kindles in the jiva the true and sincere sense that it is really not the author of any action but is only a servant of the Lord doing works not for any extraneous reward or threat of punishment or lure of worldly pleasures but because it is His nature and end to do so. The Acharya makes clear in one of his gadyas that its sole desire is to serve Him eternally (nitya kinkaro bhavami)[44].

---

[42] Bhagavadgita, XVIII - 5.

In several passages of both the Suthra Bhashya and the Gita Bhashya, the Acharya makes clear that without the assent or sanction of the Lord, as the Upanishads declare, not even a tiny blade of grass can move. All actions of the Finite are directed only to one end and that is to please Him and Him alone. such an attitude of mind is in keeping with the true nature of the self. Anything contrary is detrimental to its svas-

---

43 Ramanuja's Bhashya on Gita p. 299 (Translated by Govindacharya)

44. Ramanuja's Saranagati Gadya.

varupa. In the Gita Bhashya he writes that to such a devotee "He gives Himself"[45].

One may ask what makes the Lord deliver Himself and become easily accessible to the devotee. It is the 'unstinted and unfailing love of the Hound of Heaven for the struggling souls in Samsara'. As already noted creation is the daya karya of the Lord. The Lord creates for sport and therefore He likes to be very near His children. But His compassion is not conditioned by the Finite's Karma - for, according to Ramanuja, Karma is not some inexplicable rule that binds the individual to endless cycle of births and deaths but is the chief operative principle governing the deliberations of the Finite in the world, the great school of God. He writes in his Suthrabhashya " what the Lord Himself aims at is ever to increase the jiva's happiness to the highest degree and to this end it is instrumental that He should reprove and reject the infinite and intolerable mass of sins".[46] Thus krpa and karma are not opposed. The latter is the principle through which the former operates to enable the jiva to realise its end.

When devotion deepens, it engenders in the jiva the desire for communion with the Supreme. The thirst for such communion becomes intense and the Finite feels separation from the Husband of the Universe unbearable. Realising its utter weak nature, unworthiness and helplessness, it readily sacrifices all egoity, renounces all desire for worldly pursuits and amusements and dedicates itself solely and entirely to the

---

45. Ramanuja's Gita Bhashya, P. 289.

46 Sri Bhashya, S.B.E., Vol, 48 P. 448.

service of God and the godly. It realises that the sole purpose of its existence is dedicated and devoted service to Him. In the language of the Poet Tagore, it begs the Lord 'to give it the strength to submit its will to His will'. Ramanuja terms such humility, complete abnegation and resignation and surrendering to the Almighty ' Prapatti '. Arthapancaka, a work by Pillai Lokacharya, a later disciple of Ramanuja, defines Prapatti as ' the means of unreservedly placing the Self in His hands and ridding oneself of all notions of securing salvation by self-effort. It is an attitude of mind entirely resigned to His will '. [47] It is the state of mind, whence according to Ramanuja, the individual realises the supreme truth that ' I am not He, but His eternal dasa, not ' soham ' but ' dasoham '; and effaces himself .... every thought, word and deed is transfigured into kainkarya or worship o the Lord.'

In moksha or the state of Final release, Ramanuja holds, the individual does not become one with Brahman. As prof. Srinivasachari observes 'Mukti is the return from the becoming of samsara to the being of Brahman ...... and thus a removal of the empirical process due to the complex of avidya, karma and the infinite progress of causality'.[48] The jiva does not lose its individuality. Rather the qualities of intelligence, bliss and other essential qualities which were obsevred and contracted by karma expand and manifest themselves when bondage passes away ' even as the lustre of the gem is not created by the act of

---

47. Pillai Lokacharya, Artha pancaka, Ch on Prapatti.

48. P. N. Srinivasachari : Philosophy of the Visistadvaita.

polishing it'. Moksha is only putting off the imperfection that will have veiled the divine nature of the Finite and checked its potentialities. In such a blissful state the jiva does not become Brahman but becomes like Brahman. It the Suthra Bhashya the Acharya makes clear that the jiva becomes akin to the Lord in almost ever respect' with the exception of world energy. Writes, he 'the released soul freed from all that hides its true nature, possesses the power of intuitively beholding the Pure Brahman but does not possess the power of ruling and guiding the different forms of motion and rest belonging to animate and inanimate nature'.

One may ask whether the Finite has a return to samsaric life. No, never. The released will have freed itself from the fetters of bondage. It will have attained supreme bliss. It will have nothing to long for. Evidently it does not enter on any other form of activity. So its returning to samsara is altogether excluded. Ramanuja also makes clear in the Suthra Bhashya that there will be no conflict between the individuality of the jiva and the universality of the Lord. The jiva is the Prakara of Isvara and so is ruled by Him. It is loved most dearly by Him, enjoys His presence and has no fear of lapsing back to samsara. In the words of Acharya, co-operation with the will of the supreme, dwelling eternally in loving contemplation of Him, revealing within themselves the perfections of His nature, while He animates and maintains them and bears infinite love for them "constitutes the condition of the jiva in release." [49]

---

49. Sribhashya, S. B E., Vol. 48, P. 771

The philosophy of the Finite self according to Ramanuja regards life on earth not as an accidental mishap but rather as a ladder of love in which the Finite, whose divine nature is obscured by avidya karma and consequently will have become ' intellectually bankrupt, morally debased and spiritually destitute ' gradually dissociates itself from the coils of material existence and ascends spiritually towards its heavenly home. It is merely an adventure in the kingdom of God that intellectually illumines, morally purifies and spiritually elevates the personality of the jiva and qualifies it to participate in the riches of God's creation. It avoids the evils of sectarian thinking and instead of increasing the gulf between religion and science, bridges the logically established with the intuitively experienced. Instead of asking the devotees to mortify their flesh and starve their heart, Ramanuja advises them to look up for light and lead and convert their lives into ' a golden river of love and ecstasy finding peace in the boundless ocean of Sachidananda'. For the Acharya life on earth is not a penalty we pay for some unknown and inexplicable cosmic illusion but more ' a living gita, a breathing upanishad, a moving temple, a hymning torrent of Divine rapture.'[50] It is more a search for truth and peace than power and plenty. Perhaps the best expression of such a noble sentiment is expressed by the following simple verse that was the maxim of Gandhi' s life.

He is the true Vaishnava who knows and feels
Another's woes as his own,
Ever ready to serve, he never boasts.
He bows to every one and despises no one,

---

[50] Suddhananda Bharathi, Alwar Saints, Page. 3

Keeping his thought, word and deed pure.
Blessed is the mother of such an one. He
Reverences every woman as his mother.
He keeps an equal mind and does not
Stain his lips with falsehood: nor
Does he touch another's wealth.
No bonds of attachment can hold him.
Ever in tune with Rama nama, his body
possesses in itself all places of pilgrimage
Free from greed and deceit, passion
And anger, this is true Vaisnava."

● ● ●

THE BRAHMAN TAUGHT IN THE UPANIṢADS BY THE NEGATIVE METHOD OF ‘NETI NETI’

SWAMI BRAHMANANDENDRA SARASWATI.

I

1. The Consistent trend of Negative Characterization of Brahman in the Upaniṣads.

It is well known that in Vedānta, Brahman, Reality, sole and secondless, of the nature of pure consciousness which can be intuited as the immediate self with self-certifying validity, the inalienable, unobjectifiable subject of all experience, is described in three ways.

1) *Positively*, as "Truth, Knowledge, Bliss, consciousness, *Brahman*, *Ātman* etc. (*Tait* ,2.1) or

2) *Negatively* as " not big, not small, not short, not long, not ether, not air, not taste, not smell, not sight, not hearing, not speech, not mind, not the vital force, impartite, differenceles, secondlesss; similarly, " not cause, not effect, differenceless, (*Bṛ*., 3.8.8) secondess " (Denial of all Physical and Psychical features) and again " the *Ātman*, Unborn, undecaying, immortal, without fear, the *Brahman* " (Denial of all Becoming and change) (*Bṛ*., 4.4.25).

3) *As a universal negative* – "as not predicable as such and such" (*Bṛ*., 2.3.6). There are certain other descriptions of Brahman in such terms as "All this Phenomenon is Brahman only, " All this is Ā*tman* only" (*Chānd*., 7.25.4) " There is absolutely no multiplicity anywhere" (*Bṛ*., 4.4. 19), though positively worded are in fact negative since they purport to deny all difference in *Brahman* and hence fall under (2) above viz., negation of features.

Another noteworthy feature is that even though *Brahman* might be described as if endowed with positive features at as (1) or with negative features as at (2) yet, the final description is by the universal negative at as (3), that is to say, as not predicable as such and such. Thus the correct intended, ultimate, teaching of all the upaniṣads consistently is of Brahman characterized by the universal negative.

2. Basic objections to Negation-clarifications.

Why does Vedānta describe *Brahman* negatively thus ? We shall explain the positive descriptions shortly, but the chief method of characterizing *Brahman* is either by negation of specific features or by universally negating predication or affirmation as such of any features, absolutely. What is the rational or logical basis for this basic negative procedure as charactrerizing *Brahman*? Two basic objections to the propriety of such procedure are:-

(1) Does not the universal negative, besides negating the reality of the world phenomenon of name and form, also operate to deny the reality of *Brahman* itself, by the very fact of the universality of such negation, so that nihilism is unavoidable ?

(2) Even granting for the nonce that *Brahman* exists, still negation of any feature automatically implies the affirmation of the opposite feature so that duality is unavoidable.

We shall have to clear these basic objections.

3. Negaion does not lead to Nihilism.

(1) Regarding the first objection concerning possibility of Nihilism the very suggestion is pointless. You should not throw the baby with the bath. '*Neti neti*' ('Not predicable as such and such') is not a blank negation of all and everything. It is a description of the witness consciousness, the inalienable immediate self, the substratum of all superimposition of name and form and of all notions such as 'I am body, man warrior, householder, happy, unhappy, wise, ignorant; and it is not a negation for the sake of negation, but a negation of superimposed features only in order to turn the aspirant's attention to the substratum self on which such features of name and form of embodied effects or *Saṁsāra* are superimposed. That is why the upaniṣads call the *Ātman*, viz., the self to be intuited by means of the teaching, viz:, by realizing the unpredictability or unaffirmability of the inalienable, unobjectifiable self of the nature of pure consciousness. That is why the śruti, after teaching "अथात आदेशो नेति नेति" (Hence, therefore, the teaching- 'Not predicable as such and such' - (*Bṛ*., 2.3.6) follows it up by the affirmation of the undeniable self 'अन्यत् परमस्ति अथ नामधेयं सत्यस्य सत्यमिति' "There is *Brahman*, the cosmic self apart from this (viz: apart from the manifest effects of the elemental world and impressions thereof). Such *Brahman* is the real of all (the so-called) reals".

4. Brahman, the ever - revealed undeniable self.

Indeed unless one is already rooted in a positive Principle of consciousness the changless witness self, even the denial of features itself is impossible, for if the denier is also denied, the denier of such denier remains in the background as the undeniable subject. Only what can be objectified can be denied, but not the eternal subject. Śaṅkara rightly points this out in his commentary :- 'किञ्चिद् हि परमार्थमालम्ब्य अपरमार्थः प्रतिषिद्धयते' (It is only after getting established in an inalienable reality that the unreal is negated as in the case of the rope, getting established in the knowledge of which the appearances of snake etc, are negated.) Again, elsewhere in the context of refuting Nihilism, he conveys the same fact :- "नह्ययं सर्वप्रमाणप्रसिद्धो लोकव्यवहारः अन्यत्तत्वमनधिगम्य शक्यतेऽपह्नोतुम् अपवादाभावे उत्सर्गप्रसिद्धेः"

(Indeed this empirical phenomenon whose existence is testified by every means of perception cannot be denied unless beforehand the denier is rooted in a prius conscious principle, for, in the absence of the exception, viz: such prius conscious principale, the rule, viz : the existence of phenomena borne out by the means of perception holds good, and is valid.)

It is the undenible self that is being revealed by the śruti by the device of universal negation of all features in it as *not predicable as such and such.* Śaṅkara admirably brings out the inalienability of the self in another context thus :

'आत्मत्वाच्च आत्मनो निराकरणशङ्कानुपपत्तिः ।
न ह्यात्मा आगंतुकः कस्यचित् स्वयंसिद्धत्वात् ।'

(By the very fact of its being the self (viz: by the very fact of its being the eternal inalienable unobjectfiable subject of all experience), the denial of the self is inconceivable. Surely, the self is not an adventitious phenomenon coming and attaching itself to the self from outside, for it is self-revealed. (Ś. B., 2. 3. 7.)

So the point is that the description of the self by the negative device of नेति नेति is because: *Firstly*, the self being unobjectifiable *cannot be described*, conceptualized as endowed with features of name and form, since only what can be an *object* can be described, i. e., conceptualized as belonging to a class of objects having a common characteristic. Differenceless consciousness is not an *object* along with others. Again selfhood is not some quality, that develops in the self, that is acquired or got rid of by the self, like the dye of cloth. Self-hood is the very nature of the self, non-adventitious and inalienable like the yarn of cloth or heat of fire. There cannot be a common characteristic between the conscious subject *Brahman* and the inert object, the world phenomenon of name and form, so that you could have derived a concept of *Brahman* as characterized by specific features of categories such as, big, pleasant, partite, dual etc., such as quantity quality, number etc.

Secondly, the self being ever revealed *need not* be described positively as such and such, as you would have to do in the case of a remote, yet-to-be-cognized object of sensible perception. The self being the prius consciousness, which is *ab initio* necessary to certify and impart relative reality to the means of perception themselves, need not be cognized afresh (by such means of perception). The sun need not be illumined by its own beam. It is sufficient if the super-imposed features such as 'man', 'priest,' 'house-holder' 'ignorant' 'unhappy' etc. are rationally shown to have no existence independent of the self on which such features are superimposed and to be illusory and unreal as in the case of the beam, which has no existence apart from the sun, and being but a name for the sun itself, is illusory and unreal. The self need not be known afresh in terms of positive features. Surely, in order to get room space it is sufficient if the crowding is removed. You do not bring in anything afresh. You do not bring in space.

Thus the objection that the description of *Brahman* by negation of features as "*Neti- Neti*" leads to Nihilism is baseless.

II

Objection and Clarification

2. Let us turn to the objection that even granting that Brahman exists, still negation of any features automatically implies the affirmation of its opposite features, so that duality is unavoidable. This objection looks more formidable and fair-seeming than the first and it comes from the rank of not only the dualists who insist on two ultimate relaities, viz: Brahman and the world of phenomena even in the state of release (मोक्ष), but also by the protagonists of unity-in-multiplicity, viz: unity of Brahman as the entire *system* of cause and effect, and multiplicity of Phenomena *disparately* characterized by differences of quantity, quality and number juxtaposed in relations of space and enduring in relations of time. Absolute negation of all multiplicity as 'Not this, not

this' they say, would violate multiplicity of name and form which in fact abides in Brahman belonging inherently to its nature. How could the world of name and form arise from Brahman if such world never had any existence? (*Ex nihilo nihil fit*) How could what was not there even appear?

The contention that even a negative predicate as "Neti-Neti" is a futile expedient and involves duality of the sujbect.

Stace, for instance, voices the objection unsparingly thus: "Thus we find that all systems of thought which postulate an abstract unity as ultimate reality such as Eleaticism, Hinduism, and the system of Spinoza attempt to avoid the difficulty by saying nothing positive about the one. They apply to it only negative predicates which tell us not what it is but what it is not. Thus the Hindus speak of Brahman as formless, immutable, imperishable, unmoved, uncreated. But this, of course, is a futile expedient. In the first place, even a negative predicate involves the duality of the subject. And in the second place, a negative predicate is always by implication a positive one. You cannot have a negative without a positive. To deny one thing is to affirm its opposite. To deny motion of the one, by calling it the unmoved is to affirm rest of it.

Two charges are made here which have to be answered, namely, (i) that Brahman is described, negatively and not positively in order to avoid the difficulty of having to explain duality, and ii) that even a negative predicate impliedly affirms its opposite which is positive or its absence which too is positive. In either duality of the subject is case unavoidable.

The first charge is baseless, for, Negation of Phenomenon in Brahman is not off hand, not before showing rationally the falsity of such phenomenon, but only after and on the basis of such rationale.

Regarding the first charge, namely, that the negative description of Brahman is meant to avoid the difficulty of having to account for duality, it must at the outset be grasped that Vedānta steers clear of the basic error into which all the speculative systems of Philosophy lapse, viz : of taking the manifold of Phenomena cognized by the senses (which cognition is confined to the waking state only), already and without any valid grounds, to be real and then of seeking to arrive at Reality as the cause or ground of such already presumed-to-be real phenomena. *In Vedānta the question is never how, when or where the manifold of phenomena originated, but the question is whether it has originated at all.*

Now in order to establish the reality of the world phenomena characterized by space – time relation, it is necessary to determine, when such world came into existence, viz : at what point of time the world came into being, because if at all the world phenomenon has to be called as really existing, you have to show that it has commenced at a certain point of time, since commencement means commencement in time.

But then, before answering the question, when the world commenced we have to know when time commenced and where, viz : which point of space did space occupy. This is because time must commence in time and space must be located somewhere. But you have no time other than this time, nor space other than this space in which the time-space world could commence and be located. If you posit such unknown time and space, it would be a groundless assertion, unverifiable by any means of knowledge, And since bound as you are to time - space as the ultimate criteria of reality and since you cannot show when time commenced or where space was located, you cannot assert the existence of the world as a reality as a spatio-temporal entity, since there cannot be any time before the commencement of the world or any space before the coming into being of the world (included in time and space which are yet to come) The being or existence of the world has not commenced in time and space so the reality of the world is not attested by any valid means of knowledge, which are available and hold good to certify only spatio - temporal phenomena. If on earth you drop an object from a height, the object can be said to commence falling at a certain time and occupy a certain point of space when it falls on earth. But if it is asked when on earth does earth, if dropped, commence to fall ,and where on earth it will fall, viz., what point on earth,earth will occupy, you cannot answer because earth cannot commence in time even before time has come in or occupy a point in space even before space has come in. Since you have no other time or space at which the world phenomenon commenced and in which it subsisted, the reality of the world phenomena is not established by any criteria which you have for determining reality.

Moreover, the Phenomenal world means the Phenomenon as perceived by the perceptive process of a perceiver, perceiving means, a perceived object and a percept. Now by what means of perception is this perceptive process itself testified? Not by the means of perception which are not there prior to the getting into operation of the perceptive process foisting the phenomena. The curious fact is that even though the waking phenomena can never be known by the waking ego by the means of perception but directly apprehended by pure consciousness (which is there even prior to the perceptive means) as an immediacy, yet the understanding believes erroneously that the waking phenomenon (which is what is normally meant by the term phenomenon) is cognized and validly certified as real by the waking ego through the means of Perception !

In dream, while the dream lasts, this waking world is completely out of the picture and the dreamer has, during the dream, no idea that the waking objects ever exist or that he has left his waking rela tives etc. behind and that he is going to rejoin them on rewaking. The dream during its reign rules in every respect as the waking state itself. The waking world is blotted out for him and another world comes into play.

In sleep the entire phenomenon of ego and non-ego disappears and on waking we relate our experience of sleep as a state of absolute worldlessness and bliss.

How could such a world phenomenon of name and form, which lacks a certificate in waking itself, which is alienated in dream and which is totally absent in sleep, be taken as real ? But the witness consciousness, the changeless 'I' which immediately reveals the entire experience of the three states and says, *I* who was awake, dreamt such a and such a dream and in sleep , knew absolutely nothing-neither myself, nor the world and now, am back to waking am the abiding inalienable reality, apprehension of which is the only means of realizing the illusory or unreal character of the world phenomenon appearing as the experience of the three states of consciousness–waking, dream and sleep.

It is on the basis of such unique rationale that Vedānta negates the world as " Neti–Neti". It is only after showing the unreality of name and form superimposed on Brahman, Reality, and being already established in such Brahman, Reality, that Vedānta negates the world as *Neti–Neti*, and not before such showing.

So the first charge made out by Stace that Brahman is described negatively not positively in order to avoid the difficulty of having to explain duality is baseless and has arisen because of a failure to grasp the rationale (like the examination of the total and universal experience of the three states of consciousness–waking, dream and sleep as demonstrated above) on the basis of which duality is shown to be illusory-unreal.

Nor is *the second charge*, that even a negative predicate impliedly affirms its opposite which is positive or its absence which too is positive thus retaining duality in tact, tenable. This too arises from a misconception of the purpose of the device of negation in Vedānta. It must be noted that whether Brahman is described negatively as formless, immutable, imperishable, unmoved, uncreated or, positively, as Truth, Knowledge, Bliss, Consciousness, Brahman, Atman etc., the purpose is one and the same, namely, to negate its opposite feature which is likely to be a superimposed feature in Brahman due to non–enquiry. So it makes no difference to the ultimate aim (namely, to negate a superimposed feature in Brahman, viz : *to negate predication as such of any features.* There is the story of a dullwitted person who, on his committing some default, was chided, ‘ You stupid fellow, you are not a man.’ On this, the dull-witted one, wanting to make sure that he was a man, approached a sage and asked him, ‘ Sir, please tell me who I am.’ The sage after telling him that he was of not a stone, not a tiger, etc., said that he was none these and finally said, ‘You are not a no-man either’, and concluded his instruction and became silent. The dull-witted person was now worse confounded than before and said, ‘ Sir, instead of telling me who I am, you denied my being any thing and kept quiet. Why not you instruct me positively who I am ?’ The sage replied, ‘ How can a person who cannot understand that the statement ‘ you are not a no-man ’ means that he is a man, understand it (that he is a man), even if he were to be told positively that he is a man ?’ Probably the dull–witted person could grasp that he was man if he had been told positively that he was a man instead of being told that he was not a no-man. That is not the point. The point to be grasped is that the self, the eternal, unobjectifiable subject of all predication and features, can never be the object of any predication or features, whether negatively worded or positively worded. The self is ever free from characteristics. The self is neither man nor no - man. When it is said positively that the self is a concious principle, the intention is to deny inertia or unconsciousness that is likely to be superimposed on the pure self. The ŝruti in one sweep *prohibits affirmation or predication itself* of anyfeature whatsoever, by the universal negation 'Neti–Neti' (not affirmable as such and such or asnot suchand such), since Brahman is self-revealed, secondless and being the subject of every assertion it unobjectifiable.

You cannot say that by this characterization of Brahman as not armffiable, the opposite of affirmation, namely, negation (nullity), is implied because non-affirmability as such includes the non-affirmation of the negation too.

Nor can it be contended that a negation of negation would mean the affirmation of the reality of the world, for the world which is negated as false includes this act of negation too, and so nothing but the sole unpredicable Being, Brahman remains. The act of negation applies to the world appearance as well as to itself which is already included in such world appearance.

Nor is it correct to say, as Stace does in the same context, that even a negative predicate involves the duality of the subject. When, for instance, a person, on realizing that what he thought was a snake is only a rope says, " The rope is no snake, " does he mean to convey that the rope exists as a second to the snake? Does he mean the duality of the subject, the rope, of which its being snake is the predicate ? Does he mean that the snake which he is denying is as real as the rope? Does he not simply mean the sole reality of the rope ?

So is the case when features such as motion, rest etc., are denied of Brahman, Being. Such denial of features does not connote duality of the subject, namely, Brahman, but the reality, the sole reality of the subject (Brahman) free from the subject–object abstraction. Thus the charge that even a negative predicate impliedly affirms its opposite which is positive, thus retaining duality, is ill-conceived.

A fortiori, a negative predicate does not imply the positive presence of the absence (अभाव पदार्थं)of the subject negated on the argument that the being of anything is the not-being of its opposite. The being of Brahman is not an event in time or place. When said negatively that the self is not an unconscious principle, the intention is again to deny inertion or unconsciousness that is likely to be superimposed on the pure self.

Thus in the case of Brahman, the cosmic self, firstly, regarding the negative descriptions of Brahman the description '*formless*' operates *to prohibit* the likely affirmation of its opposite feature, namely '*form*' in Brahman; similarly the negative description *immutable, to deny mutability*; the descripiton '*unmoved*' to *deny motion*; the description '*uncreated*' *to negate creation.*

Secondly, regarding the positive description such as 'एकमेवाद्वितीयम' the positive description '*one*' (एकमेव) operates *to deny manyness*, viz : multiplicity. duality, difference inside or outside Brahman and thus to teach that Brahman, being of the nature of consciousness itself, is secondless. Similarly in the description of Brahman as "*Being, Consciousness, Bliss* (सत्यज्ञानानन्द), '*Being*' (सत्य) operates *to deny becoming* or *non–*

being It asserts the fact that Brahman is the only and true being and that the being (व्यावहारिक सत्ता) of all other entities such as the mind and mind-foisted objective phenomena is only so-called being and that such so-called being has no existence apart from Brahman, the true and the only Being like the existence of the sun-beam which is but a name for and has no existence different form, the sunlight. Similarly the description "*consciousness*" (ज्ञान) *to deny ignorance or inertness* of Brahman, and to assert the fact that Brahman is the only and true consciousness and the consciousness of the mind and senses is only so-called consciousness and has no existence apart from Brahman of the nature of consciousness itself like the red hot nature of the iron ball whose red hot nature is really that of fire and not of the iron ball, or like the reflection (in a medium) which has no existence apart from the object reflected.

So too, the description '*Bliss*' (आनन्द) operates *to deny sorrow* in Brahman and to assert the fact that the bliss derived from objects through the senses is only so-called bliss and has no existence apart from Brahman of the nature of unconditioned freedom or bliss.

Being of Brahman refers to pure consciousness itself, the absence of which is inconceivable for, to conceive its absence or its opposite namely unconsciousness, you need consciousness again. If absence (अभाव) could be positively present (अभाव पदार्थ) then it ceases to be absence at all; but would be a positive entity ; but such an entity as positive absence (अभाव पदार्थ) is unverifiable by any means of vaild knowledge. It istherefore a futile postulate.

Such is the purpose and rationale of negation as " *Neti-Neti* " adopted in Vendānta as a device to characterize and reveal Brahman, the comsic self, the sole and secondless reality.

○ ● ○

Academy of Comparative Philosophy and Religion, Belgaum.

A short report (26-9-1976 to 25-12-1976)

Smt. Padma Kulkarni, M. A., delivered lectures on the " Philosophy of *Jñāneshwara* " for 5 days from 31-10-1976 to 4-11-1976. This series of lectures was inaugurated by Principal Yalgi, R. P. D. College, Belgaum. On the concluding day, Shri P.R. Dubhashi, I.A.S., summed up the lectures and gave his views on the philosophy of Jñāneshwara. These lectures will be printed and published as soon as the manuscript is received from Mrs. Kulkarni.

Nāma-saptāha was held for 5 days, ending on-the Vaikunthachaturdashi day, 4-11-1976. A few sādhakas came from different places to attend the saptāha. The meditation and the talks were much helpful for the spiritual development of all the persons, attending the saptāha.

During this period, Shri Rangarao Joshi gave talks in Kannada on Bhāgavata for about a month.

Dr. (Miss) S. A. Nachane
M. A, Ph. D.

Dr. Miss) S. A. Nachane M.A., Ph.D, of the Baroda University gave a lecture in Marathi on "Advaita and Bhakti" on 8-11-1976. The lecture was highly appreciated by the audience. Later on, Shri Bhadragiri Keshavadas paid a visit to Gurudeva Mandir on 19-11-1976 He gave a spiritual talk, followed by bhajana- kīrtana for about two and half hours. The hall was packed with audience, which was spell - bound by the saint's performance.

His Holiness Shri Shaṅkarāchārya Swami of Dabholi Math paid a visit to the Gurudeva Mandir on 10-11-1976, when the working of this Trust was explained to him. He was happy to find that literature on spiritual topics was being published by this Trust for the spiritual development of the public.

The Hon'ble Shri H. R. Gokhale, Minister of Law and Company Affairs, Central Govt., paid a visit to Gurudeva Mandir on 10-11-1976, when he was accompanied by Shri B. M. Gogate, the well-known industrialist and philanthropist of Belgaum. Shri K. D. Sangoram received the guests and showed them round the building. Shri Parulekar explained the work which was being done by this Trust. Some of the publications of this Trust were presented to Shri Gokhale and Shri Gogate by Shri Sangoram. Shri P. R. Dubhashi, Divisional Commissioner, and some other officers were present. Shri Baburao Thakur, Shri Sayanak, M. L. A., and some other non-officials were also present. Mrs. Gokhale came a little later, accompanied by Smt. Ushatai Gogate; and they spent about half an hour in the Gurudeva Mandir in a quiet and calm way. Shri Sangoram presented " Life of Shri Gurudeva Ranade " to them and both Mrs. Gokhale and Mrs. Gogate expressed their happiness for the spiritual atmosphere in the Mandir.

Shri Dhunda Maharaj Deglurkar visited the Gurudeva Mandir on 24-12-1976 while on his way to Goa to preside over the *Akhila Bharatīya Kīrtanakāra Sammelana* there. During his sojourn here he gave an enlightening discourse.

The following persons were enrolled as life-subscribers (Rs 100/- each) and life-members (Rs. 250/- each) during this period.

Life-Subscribers.

1. Shri R. Y. Rajadhyaksha, I. T. Officer, Kolhapur
2. Shri S. C. Dalwai, Commercial Tax Officer, Belgaum.
3. Shri Narayanrao. S. Bijurkar, Bhilai (M. P.)
4. Shri A. B. Velangi, Tilakwadi, Belgaum.
5. Shri M. H. Karmarkar- Dadar, Bombay.

Life-Members

1. Shri Shrinivas Venkatesh Deshpande, Dharwar. Rs. 250/-
2. Shri M. M. Datye, Advocate, Belgaum (part payment) Rs. 101/-
3. Shri B. V. Joshi, Borivali, Bombay (in full payment) Rs. 150/-
4. Shri N. G. Kulkarni, Assistant Engineer, Sawantwadi. Rs. 250/-
5. Shri K. S. Dalvi, Civil Judge, Bangalore (part payment) Rs. 50/-

Donations were received from the following persons.

1. Shri S. Ananthanarayana, Tilakwadi, Belgaum Rs. 10/-

2. Dr. R. H. Karmarkar, F. R. C. S. (Eng)., Bombay.	Rs. 501/-
3. Shri V. V. Ambardekar, Tilakwadi, Belgaum	Rs. 100/-
4. Shri S. W. Bhat Mahajan, Belgaum.	Rs. 10/-
5. Dr. (Mrs.) Sushilabai Wagdarikar, Poona.	Rs. 50/-
6. Dr. V. G. Shirhatti, Dandeli.	Rs. 10/-
7. Shri S. P. Mahindrakar, Dharwar.	Rs. 11/-
8. Aravinda Circle, Belgaum.	Rs. 25/-
9. Dr. S. S. Ajgaonkar, Bombay.	Rs. 402/-
10. Shri S. P. Garg, Retd. Dy. Secretary, Jaipur	Rs. 40/-

We are grateful to all the above persons for extending their material assistance to this Public Trust. We are particularly thankful to Dr. Karmarkar and Dr. Ajgaonkar for enrolling themselves as 'Donors' of this Trust.

We have taken up printing of the Marathi book "गुरुदेव रानडे व त्यांची पारमार्थिक शिकवण" written by Shri G. V. alias Kakasaheb Tulpule. The printing will be over in a couple of months and the book will be available to the public by the end of Feb., 1977.

We have added a few books to the library.

* * *